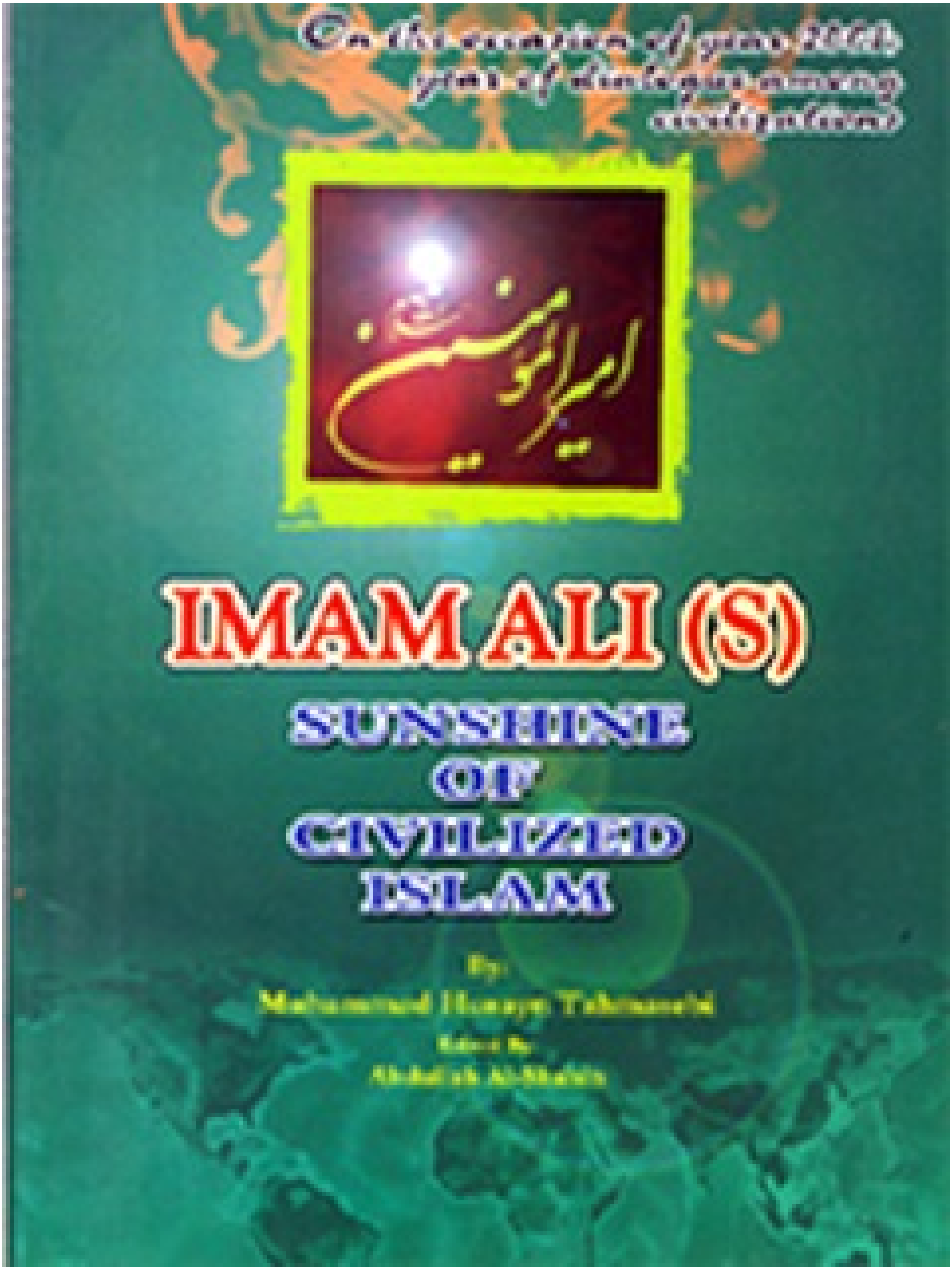

IMAM ALI (S)
SUNSHINE
OF
CIVILIZED
ISLAM
By

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

IMAM ALI (S) Sunshine of Civilized Islam

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:Published in print

Ansariyan

:Digital Publisher

Ghaemiyeh center of computerized researches

Contents

IMAM ALI (S) Sunshine of Civilized Islam

ID Book

IMAM ALI (S) Sunshine of Civilized Islam

Author: Muhammad Husayn Tahmasebi

Editor: Abdullah al-Shahin

Publisher: Ansariyan Publications – Qum

First Edition ١۴٢٣-١٣٨١

Negheen Press Quantity: ٢٠٠٠

Number of Pages: ١٨۴ Size: ١۴٣ x ٢٠۵

ISBN: ٩۶۴-۴٣٨-٣٧٧-X

PREFACE

So long as three great problems of the world; the degradation of man through indigence and pauperism, the corruption of women through hunger, the ignorance and poverty existing on earth, are unsolved; so long as spuriously creating hells amid the civilization on earth and social suffocation is possible in any part of the world, the personality of Imam Ali (s) and his speeches and maxims collected in Nahj al-Balighah can not fail to be .of use

Nowadays many people of the world are in easy circumstances because of the advancement of learning and technique, but regretfully the morals and ideality are, at the same time, disappearing among them and it seems that the world is badly in need of .morals and spirituality

It is clear that the modern science is the result of a series of quarrels occurred between .church and the scientists during the Dark Ages

The people expected that church would teach them the principles of religion and would direct the society to welfare and peacefulness, but it was contrary to their expectation that the church persisted in its opinion to protect its prestige and imposition of its pretended ideas as the divine religion. It surprised every scientific movement and consequently scientists became involved in many difficulties. When they cleared the immoral acts of church, they were put to torture and finally they were badly killed.

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As history says, Giardona Bruno the philosopher and physicist of Italy was burnt to death before the crowed after spending eight years in jail. Also Copernicus the famous .mathematician was harassed by the church

Galilee, the famous astronomer was thrown into jail at the age of seventy and eventually .got a temporary release when he fell down on his knees and asked for forgiveness

Such ill-treatment towards scientists and reaction against enlightenment made people hate church and turn back from religion. The people, on the supposition that knowledge is the only means of deliverance from misfortunes, kept themselves back from the spiritual .centers and unfortunately they (the Europeans) kept on that until the present time

Of course disgust against religious matters brings to being atheism and irreligion and .atheists do not assume any responsibility for their acts towards conscience and morals

Therefore the science which is taught in Europe is poor in morals and spiritual things and .its teaching is merely for the science itself apart from morality or what it results later on

Although the modern learning has made life so easy as all people can delight in it, it does not accept any responsibility for being useful for the good of society per se, as many .terrible and destructive weapons have resulted from it

In general, the Europeans have separated religion from worldly attachments. According to their opinion there is no any relevance between them and finally they have chosen the .last one

The science without principles was set by the hands of many cruel and impious exploiters, who enjoyed the products of the people's labor in backward countries and if they wanted .to get rid of their mischief, greater dangers impended upon (threatened) them

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In addition to that, we ourselves see that the low classes of people especially the black-skinned are inhumanly treated in America and racial feelings have made thousands and thousands of people in Europe live homelessly and helplessly.

These ill-favored actions indicate non-observance morals and justice and it, automatically, is arisen from irreligion and impiety.

Nowadays, racialism and unjust discrimination as well as being inattentive to people's rights are, sorrily, big tragedies at the days of advancement of learning.

Recently some startling news are heard on radios that a number of teenage students have organized criminal groups and entered into classrooms armed with pistols or knives. It is more regretful that narcotics are distributed by them too. The numbers of such organizations have been increased twice as many since ١٩٨٩ in the U.S. of America. The competent authorities have cautioned the parents that if the circumstances continued unabated the United States would face many perils.

It can easily be said that so many crimes, assassinations, suicides and intentional fire accidents which are of frequent occurrence all over the world, are resulted from immorality and irreligiousness.

It is worthy to be mentioned that all divine religions, especially Islam, have encouraged people to learn the knowledge of public utility and have guaranteed it from the view of conscience and moral, in order to fulfill this purpose.

God has sent Prophets with the laws that suited people's requirements of their own time and have showed them the way of their life.

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Each new Prophet has cancelled some of the previous laws by a new divine law as the nations would progress.

In Principle they have called people to theism and it was applied to all attainments and virtues.

There were among them five arch-Prophets, who had missions for the whole world. They were Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ and Mohammad, peace be upon them all.

Every one of them had appointed a competent man as his successor to protect the divine law from deviation and distortion.

Jesus Christ had educated twelve persons as his disciples. The progress of Christianity was indebted to their services.

Mohammad was the last Prophet of God. The Holy Qur'an was descended from Heavens to him. It guides people, it shows the way of life and it shall suit the requirements of mankind till the Day of Resurrection.

The education done by Mohammad enabled the people of Arabia to win a victory over two great empires of that time, Iran and Rome though they (people of Arabia) were not worthy of attention before the advent of Islam.

Although the history says that Imam Ali was the fourth caliph of Islam but according to the reliable traditions of the great scholars of Sunni and Shia, the Prophet of Islam had appointed him as his successor and also his executor.

He was educated by the Prophet since childhood and had accompanied him step by step and at the time when the verses of Qur'an would come down from Heavens he was present with the Prophet and he perceived the interpretation of the verses directly by the Prophet (s). Therefore he learned the whole virtues and the good qualities, and consequently his words and deeds conformed to the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Qur'an acted upon him more than anyone else.

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He who likes to understand Islam has to study Imam Ali's life carefully to react to the .stimulus of civilized Islam

Therefore Imam Ali's words and deeds are perfect examples for the different classes of .people especially the leaders and the statesmen

As it was said earlier, there are many corruptions and crimes all over the world. The youths are subjected to dangers on account of misusing of science, publication of immorality and exploiting unfairly the people of the backward countries by some .irreligious and Mammonish groups

SELF DENIAL AND PIETY

question comes up for discussion about those, who deny themselves and go on without everything though some of them are able to be in easy circumstances and take pleasure .in easy life, but they fall into habit with containment and keep aloof from a luxury life

From immemorial time secession from worldly pleasure had been regarded as a means .of purification of spirit and improvement of inner serenity

Those, who wanted to keep aloof from the worldly attachments, used to go out of cities and stay in the forests or take refuge in the caves of mountains to worship God according .to their own principles

They would pass their life with bare subsistence, if the inhabitants of the nearby villages .gave them something to eat or they could find some fruits of wild trees of forests

At first some people were under necessity of leaving their houses because of the oppression of the rulers but later on whoever determined on saving himself from worldly ties adopted this way of worshiping God and usually took the consequences. But their actions were not governed by a divine law; therefore passions and desires might have .overcome them and would break all moral fetters

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Of course Islam does not permit the Muslims to adopt this way of worship nor it does approve leaving their houses to seclude and pray in such fashion, but it has incidentally recommended them to put to use all possibilities of time and place in moderation. A Muslim should be responsible for his wife and children. He should earn his livelihood through lawful means. He should not trespass against the others' rights and should follow virtues and piety, and behave in opposition to carnal desires. These characteristics are the principles of worship in Islam. Such worship brings up in the individuals courage, .devotion and generosity

It is evident that a person is deeply impressed with customs and conditions of his environment and his hereditary particulars. Of course the scientific and religious learning .and the spiritual and physical specifications are of great importance too

Persons do not bear any resemblance in attitude of mind, the reflective faculty and nature and consequently their reactions are not the same towards hardships and .difficulties

Great men are not only praised on account of highness of position or by their extraordinary power, but under the title of greatness they have to hold some attainments .and show manly behaviors that are the essential conditions of greatness

Undoubtedly courage and moral heroism are the best qualities, not only that kind of courage, which someone runs to risk carelessly, but what is acceptable is the bravery of some great leaders, who stand against the heart's desires of the close friends and are .patient of unbearable oppositions of the kinsmen or the internal enemies

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In some particular cases, it happens that a man of lacking necessary morals shows an unexpected courage, but to our understanding it can not be called real courage because this kind of courage is neither true nor dependable. Certainly courage is an admirable .quality in itself but it is not separated from the other attributes

It is linked with the other high qualities like honesty, chastity, truthfulness, abiding by one's word, steadfastness and generosity. It is an undeniable fact that people usually prefer morality to vastness of knowledge because so many big cities were destroyed by the command of educated generals (educated in the European universities) especially .during the Second World War

When we inquire into the biographies of some great men and leaders we come across much sincerity, self-sacrifice and purity that will be pleasing to us. It can safely be said that the continuance and duration of the world is indebted to the devotion of Socrates, the philosopher of ancient Greece, who drank water of hemlock to show his astray fellow-citizens the unreliability of the material things and to prove the eternity of the soul .for ever

Jesus Christ used to have a piece of dried bread and to rest on the floor to keep himself .pure from implications of the world and also to show the Jews the instability of luxuries

Many people, trying to achieve their goals, are concerned with materiality and unessential things. They usually plan to earn money as much as possible. They often are intolerant of justice and they try to rob people of their rights, in spite of the fact that the .material things are destructible and unreliable

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Now all crimes and murders, which occur frequently allover the world are arisen from .Mammonism and unlawful abuses

It is much unpleasant when we study the pitiful situation of many injured nations, who were ruled by some unjust rulers, so that their natural resources and the products of their labors were looted by foreign exploiters and in addition to it that their national feelings .were also trampled upon

.Unfortunately those customs linger in many places of the world

ADVENT OF ISLAM AND THE ROLE OF IMAM ALI

ADVENT OF ISLAM AND THE ROLE OF IMAM ALI

he matter in hand is about Imam Ali, whose life was closely bound up with the first age of the history of Islam. All the necessary conditions gathered together and consequently .made him a prodigy of learning

He, who wishes to know and understand Islam, has to be familiar with Imam Ali's particulars because he was really the mirror, the echo and also the voice of Islam. His .every word and deed was quite in accordance to the Holy Qur'an's injunctions

It is likely that many of the readers know a little about Islam, therefore I have to give them an account of a short history about it with the intent of making them acquainted with Imam Ali. Then I shall explain some of his characteristics and to show you how he resisted difficulties and how he stood against unjust discriminations and partiality .especially during his incumbency when he faced many problems

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After a great deal of time, ۶٢١ years after Christ, God gave a mission to Mohammad, His last Messenger, to guide people in the right way.

Mohammad (s), that great lawgiver, brought into existence a sudden and basic change in Arabia that was the most fundamental of all other social or religious movements, which have ever arisen allover the world. He managed to lay the foundation of a new systematic ordinance that, within fifty years, gained supremacy over the great civilizations of Rome and Iran and it also had a great influence over the original rules of the Christian Europe, which is still new and novel until nowadays.

At an early part of the ٢٠th century, a declaration was issued by the U.N. Organization concerning liberty and equality of mankind, whereas Islam had given women and girls the legal rights and independence in the economic matters fourteen centuries ago when they were buried alive because they were considered as troublesome and superfluous objects. They were empowered to deal with their affairs independently and finally were entitled to ownership at the same time, whereas in France, the cradle of liberty, women could not sell their properties without permission of their husbands until ١٩٣٨.

According to the laws of ancient Iran and Rome a system of rights and privileges kept the casts separate from each other. A merchant could not marry a daughter of a nobleman and a nobleman could not marry a princess. Slaves and ordinary people could not mix with the noblemen as well.

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But Muhammad (s), the Prophet of Islam offered people a perfect and applicable religion that responded to the subjects of theological matters, social justice, economic affairs, .equality and the rights of women in general and in detail

It was rumored that there was a drought in Mecca and that Muhammad (s) went to his uncles Abbas and Hamzah with a proposal. He said to them, "Look, your brother Abu-Talib ".has a big family. Let us go to him and ask him to permit us adopting some of his children

Finally Ja'far and Talib were adopted by Hamzah and Abbas whereas Ali (s) was brought up under the care of Mohammad when he was at the age of six. In this manner the foundation of the moral and spiritual education of this intelligent child was based near the .Prophet of Islam, the greatest educator of mankind

His mental faculties was to that extent that he believed in the Prophet at the age of ٨, therefore he, on the contrary of the other companions of the Prophet, had never worshipped idols and never shared in unreasonable demands, oppressive treatments .and unfair acts of chieftains

A new religion with its rule of equity and brotherly love came severely in contact with the previous customs. The unbelievers closed all the doors of livelihood in front the believers. They left no deficiency in creating difficulties for them; therefore the Prophet had to invite .people to theism in concealment

The secret invitation took three years of time and then a verse came down from the :Heaven

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And warn your nearest relations and be kind to him who follows you of the believers)) .۲۶:۲۱۴-۲۱۵

The Prophet's relations (Koreish family) were the most obstinate opponents of him. They were also of property and influence. They were called to gather together in the house of .the Prophet's uncle, Abu-Talib

The Prophet decided to unveil what was concealed. After a primal speech about God and :His attributes and after reproaching the idols and idolatry, he said

The first one among you, who believes in the unique God and adopts me as His" ".Messenger, will be my successor

.(No one of those, who were present, gave his adhesion except Ali ibn Abu-Talib (s

As some of the great Sunni scholars mentioned that the proposal was repeated three times and there was only Ali, who answered affirmatively and said: "O the Prophet of Allah, I believe in Allah and His messenger and I will be your assistant towards ."difficulties

The Prophet said: "I notify you of this fact that Ali ibn Abu-Talib will be my successor after [my death".[۱

It is memorable to be said that their paternal relation (Mohammad and Ali) was not the .(reason in accepting the new law by Ali (s

Many other relatives were persistently faithful to their ancestral customs like Aqil, Ali's elder brother, who was with the enemies in the first war between the Muslims and the .(unbelievers of Koreish (Badr battle

But Ali ibn Abu-Talib on account of his natural genius, which he was gifted with by God, his education acquired from the Prophet (s) at the early part of his life and because of the influence of the Prophet's manner and behavior, all these factors, made him to meditate .on the subject and believe in God

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After this meeting, the heathens, for the sake of safekeeping their position among people and their estates and also for stopping the development of Islam, made many troubles for the Muslims many times. All the devilish forces became armed to suppress this .heavenly mission

.Not only the believers were put to torture, but also the Prophet himself was not excepted

It was mentioned that the Prophet had said: "No Prophet has ever got hurt so much as I ."got

In spite of many sufferings and restrictions, the Prophet would gradually gain power over the people by moral injunctions of the Holy Qur'an with his high-toned eloquence, his .good humor and his laudable qualities

The idolaters tried hard to dispense and dispirit the believers around the Prophet by force .but their efforts were of no avail and the Muslims were regularly increasing

Now the heathens' harshness got to that extent that many Muslims, by the permission of the Prophet, determined on emigrating towards Abyssinia to live in safety under the care .of the king Negus

Although the heathens did their best to dissuade the king from supporting the Muslims, .they came to nothing

Now thirteen years passed away in this manner until the notables of Mecca put their heads together to slay the Prophet because they denied Islam to be true. Forty persons of their great men gathered in a place and decided that one person should be selected .from each tribe and that men should, altogether, attack the Prophet

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In this way the Hashemites (the Prophet's family) would not be able to face all the tribes and the matter would be settled down with payment of blood money and at the end they would get rid of this trouble.

Mohammad was informed of the plot by revelation and then he introduced the matter before Ali (s), who was the nearest to his heart, for seeking a remedy.

Ali (s) volunteered to lie in the Prophet's bed even though there were great dangers impended over him.

At last he did that risking his life and consequently the Prophet's life was saved.

When the plotters attacked the Prophet's bed and unsheathed their swords they found Ali (s) sleeping in the bed.

They asked: "Where is Muhammad (s)". Ali replied: "Had you entrusted me with him that you are asking me now".

They had no reply to this. They left seeking after the Prophet.

Imam Ali was highly praised by God on account of this devotion. The Holy Qur'an says: (And among men is one who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah and Allah is affectionate to the servants) ٢:٢٠٧.

Many of the Sunni commentators[٢] confessed that the mentioned verse was due to Ali's dignity.

The Prophet emigrated towards Medina at the same night accompanied by Abu-Bakr.

This event made an epoch in the history of Islam and it was fixed as the Islamic date by the second caliph Umar (The Hijrah).

Imam Ali (s) after managing the Prophet's home affairs decided to migrate to Medina with Mohammad's household and other companions of the Prophet, who gave up their concerns and gradually set out to join the Prophet (s).

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Following troubles and oppressions that were imposed on the Prophet in Mecca, the idolaters would incite the Jews and the nomads about Medina to kill and pillage the animals and the properties of the Muslims.

Several encounters took place in order to create disorder about Medina but the doers were chased by the companions of the Prophet and they fled away to the mountains and sheltered into the caves until the second year of Hijrah when the great men of Mecca decided to uproot the new ordinance and the believers totally.

[١] Refer to Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal's Musnad vol.١ p.p.١١١,١٥٩,٣٣٣, ath-Tha'labi's Tafseer, al-Khawarizmi's Manaqib, Nooruddeen as-Sabbagh al-Maliki in his book al-Fussool al-Muhimma p.p.١۴, Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani in his book Hilyatul Awliya' and many others.

[٢] Abu Ishaq ath-Tha'labi, Fadhil an-Nayshaboori, al-Fakhr ar-Razi, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti, Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani, al-Khawarizmi, Muhammad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji, Imam Muhammad al-Ghazali and many others.

The battle of Badr

Now a well-appointed army including nine hundred and fifty men of experienced warriors made preparations to fight the Prophet. Among them were many of the most obstinate enemies of Islam who were of Mohammad's (s) cousins. The Prophet was not ready for such a war. He sent them a message saying: "We have descended from one family and most of you are my paternal uncles and cousins. Leave me alone to encounter the Arabs. It will be your credit if I gain victory against them, but if I fail you will obtain your desire". He received no answer except a warlike reply and the Muslims were finally involved in the war.

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Although the Prophet's army consisted of three hundred and thirteen men but they were more powerful than one thousand persons because of their faith in God and .steadfastness in belief. These men of iron came before the enemy

Three men of the most revengeful enemies of Islam; ‘Utbah, his son Shaybah and his brother Waleed made an inroad, boasting about their riches and chieftaincy. They challenged three fighters of their rank because it would not fit them to fight common .fighters as they thought

Ali (s), his uncle Hamzah and his cousin ‘Ubaydah confronted them. Ali (s) encountered Waleed and inflicted a blow on his shoulder so that (as) the sword came out of his armpit and he ran away towards his father ‘Utbah to seek refuge. Ali (s) chased him and, by .another stroke on his thigh, killed him

Then he went to help his uncle Hamzah, who was facing Shaybah. They had crossed swords with each other for some time to that extent that their swords broke and had .started to grapple and punch each other

.Hamzah was a strapping man so that his enemy was not seen behind his back

Ali (s) said: “Mind your head, uncle”. He immediately threw the enemy (Shaybah) down on .the ground by a dint of his sword

Utbah and ‘Ubaydah both were brave and dauntless. When they were crossing swords’ with one another and the quarrel was still raging when ‘Utbah was killed by a sudden .attack but ‘Ubaydah's leg was seriously injured. He died on his way back to Medina

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At last the two armies attacked each other by swords. High morale and spirit of self-sacrifice were seen among the Muslim so that when the dazzling and lightening of the swords finished, the killed warriors of the enemy were seventy. The history mentioned .that half of them were killed by Ali's sword

The enemy fled away from the field and seventy persons were taken as captives by the .Islamic army

Although the Muslims won the battle but the fate would be different if Ali (s) had not come .to the field

Most of the captives knew reading and writing. The Prophet's ordered to set free any .captive, who would teach ten Muslims how to write and read

Fraternization among the Muslims

The Holy Qur'an says: (The believers are but brethren, therefore make peace between .your brothers and be careful of (your duty to) Allah that mercy may be had on you.) ۴۹:۱۰

Therefore the Prophet (s) directed the believers to brotherly, two by two, in an agreement of fraternization. The Prophet (s) fraternized between every two Muslims except Ali, who remained alone. He became depressed for that. The Prophet said to him: "You are but my own brother and you are to me as Aaron was to Moses, but no Prophet [will come after me". This is mentioned by many historians.[۱

This reliable tradition was an essential argument of the Shia to prove the immediate .succession of Imam Ali (s) after the Prophet's death

In the second year of Hijrah Imam Ali (s) got married to Fatima, the only daughter of the Prophet. She, because of her steady belief in God, her chastity and her virtuousness was unique among all classes of people. The Prophet (s) had a great respect for her. She was requested to give her hand for marriage by some men of importance but Mohammad would not accede to their requests. In reply to the suitors, he used to say: "I am waiting ."for a call from the Heaven in regard to her marriage

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.(Eventually this glory was won by Ali (s

Refer to al-Bukhari's Sahih, vol.۳ p.p.۵۴, Muslim's Sahih, vol.۲ p.p.۲۳۶-۲۳۷, Ahmad's [۱] Musnad, vol.۱ p.p.۹۸,۱۱۸-۱۱۹, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti's Tareekh al-Khulafa', al-Mas'oodi's Murooj ath-Thahab,vol.۲ p.p.۴۹ and Abu Abdullah an-Nayshaboori in his Mustadrak, vol.۳ .p.p.۹

The battle of Uhud

In the third year of Hijrah, the battle of ‘Uhud took place. Many encounters happened .after the battle of Badr and the Muslims drove the enemy back

But the clan of Koreish was always planning to take vengeance on Muhammad (s), therefore an army of five thousand strong warriors headed by Abu-Sufyan left Mecca to .attack Medina

The Prophet's army in consultation with the companions flew to arms and came out of .Medina

.The two armies met near ‘Uhud Mountain six kilometers far away from the city

The bearer of the idolaters’ banner was a brave man named Talhah ibn Abu-Talhah, who was continuously challenging. Ali (s) came forward and as soon as Talhah saw Imam Ali he said: “Nobody else had courage to fight me except you”. The historians mentioned that Ali had killed him in the turning of a hand and then his brother lifted the banner and was killed by Ali too. Some other fighters of the same family were killed one by one and finally a huge slave with the intent of avenging his owners challenged. The historians mentioned that Ali (s) had divided him into two halves by the first strike of his sword as his body was .still standing on the ground for a few moments

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The enemy, struck with terror, fled away from the field but suddenly an accident drew .their attention

A good few of the Muslims, about fifty persons, were keeping watch on a hilly narrow .pass where the enemy might cross the hill and attack from behind the Muslims' back

In spite of the Prophet's recommendations, they left the place to collect spoils when the .enemy was running away

Suddenly they saw that the place was without guardians and then the enemy seized the opportunity and passed along the mountain and made an attack upon the Muslims at the .“rear. In the meantime somebody cried loudly: “Mohammad was killed

Soon after spreading this dreadful rumor the Muslims became struck with terror and drew swords among themselves. They left Muhammad (s) alone and ran away to the .mountains except four or six persons, who remained to defend him

Some of the Sunni historians mentioned: “All of the Prophet's army, even the great .companions, escaped except Ali (s), Al-Zubayr, Talhah and Abu-Dajanah

Ali's sword was broken because of the sternness of the war. It was said that the sword named Thu'l-Fiqaar was put in his hand by an angel from the invisible world and then an unknown voice proclaimed: “There is no manly youth except Ali and there is no sword like Thu'l-Fiqaar”.[۱] One of the great fighters of Islam named Hamzah, the Prophet's uncle, .was killed in this war. This bereavement left a deep impression on the Prophet's heart

At last the Muslims were defeated in this battle but the enemy did not continue the war .and left for Mecca without occupying the supportless Medina

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It was said that Ali (s) had received ninety sword cuts in this field and in spite of the much .tiredness he did not stop his support to the Prophet (s) for an instant

In the meanwhile Gabriel came down from the Heaven and said to Muhammad: "Look there, how Ali (s) fights in high spirit of sacrifice". The Prophet answered: "Ali (s) is from me and I am from him". (We both have been brought into existence from the same (one) (.nature

[This tradition was mentioned by many Sunni scholars.[۲

Refer to Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by ibn Abul Hadeed, vol.۳ p.p.۲۷۶, al-Fusool al- [۱] Muhimma by Nooruddeen al-Maliki p.p.۴۳ and as-Seera al-Halabiyya by al-Halabi, vol.۳ .p.p.۱۲۳

Refer to Ahmad's Musnad, Ibnul Maghazili's Manaqib, Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad's Manaqib, [۲] at-Tarmithi's Sahih, ibn Maja's Sunan p.p.۹۲, Muhammad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji in his book .Kifayatut Talib and many others

The battle of Khandaq

During the ten years, in which the Prophet was living in Medina, the Muslims received much harm from the idolaters of Mecca. The enemy did not let them rest in peace of mind as they had to endure many troubles and difficulties, because they were involved in more .than seventy wars big or small at all times

In the fifth year of Hijrah an army of ten thousand warriors set out towards Medina. The commander of this strong army was Abu-Sufyan, who had grudge against Muhammad. He had a family feud with him. The Prophet, after consultation with his companions, .determined on digging a ditch around Medina to hold back the enemy

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Amr ibn 'Abd-Widd, whose heroic fame was trumpeted throughout Arabia, in concert' with four other fighters, leaped on the hither side of the moat by horse. Amr, exclaiming in .a bad state of anger, challenged loudly

The Muslims were too much frightened when this fearless hero appeared in the field. Nobody was ready to fight him. Amr said: "Where is that paradise you desire to go to and ."take pleasure for ever? I am seeking after a man, who can manage me

There was no any answer except by Ali (s), who proclaimed his readiness. "Be seated Ali, he is Amr". The Prophet said and turned his face towards his companions saying: "Who is ."ready to get us rid of this wicked man

As often as Amr challenged, Ali (s) was in readiness to face him. At last he obtained permission from the Prophet and was as happy to fight the enemy as a prisoner getting .released from jail

Ali (s), at the age of ٢۵, faced the robust hero of Arabia, who was an old hand in fighting. He was awkwardly despised by Amr. But Amr did not know that this young fellow might be .more courageous than him

Amr, at first, showed pity for Ali, who had come to meet death at the beginning of his life as he thought. He said to him: "You are too young to combat me. Who are you?" "I am Ali .ibn Abu-Talib." He replied

As soon as Amr heard this name he became a little shocked and with disappointment said: "Your father was my close friend and I dislike shedding blood of a young man like you. It ."would be better if one of your uncles came to the field

Ali (s) said: "Leave off the silly talks. I regard it as a duty to kill you for the sake of Allah." He added: "As I know, you grant one of the three requests of your opposite combatant in the battlefield. Now you grant one of my three wishes. Firstly leave off idolatry and come to be a Muslim."

Amr replied: "I will never believe in Muhammad. What is the next request?"

Ali (s) said: "Change your mind and desist from fighting or come down from your horse because I am on foot."

Amr said: "It will be disgraceful for my family if the people say that Amr is frightened by an inexperienced young man." He dismounted and rushed towards Ali (s) with a drawn sword. Ali (s) covered his head with a shield. The stroke was so strong that the shield was torn and his blessed head got a little hurt.

Ali (s) struck Amr's thigh and the illustrious hero fell down on the ground.

When the battlefield was cleared of dusts, the Muslims became so delighted when they saw Ali (s) sitting on the chest of Amr and was going to cut off his head from the body.

Amr, at his last gasp, made his will that his valuable cloths and weapons not to be taken up.

Ali acceded to his request and said: "It is too easy for me to forget it."

Then those four men who had escorted Amr ran away to pass over the ditch. One of them, when trying to escape, fell down into the ditch. The Muslims began to stone him but he bade defiance to a man to fight him.

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.Ali (s) came into the ditch and killed him with one stroke of his sword

Some Sunni historians[۱] mentioned that the Prophet had said: "The value of Ali's stroke, before God, on the day of the ditch is more than the obedience of the two world's ".(creatures (the angels and the human beings

[۱] Al-Hakim an-Nayshaboori in his Mustadrak, vol.۳ p.p.۳۲, al-Mas'oodi in his Murooj ath-Thahab and at-Tabari in his Tareekh.

Amr, who was the only hope of the idolaters of Koreish, was unexpectedly killed and consequently they were seized with deep fright. Abu-Sufyan was surprised how to help the situation. At the same time a bad storm arose and he decided to go back to Mecca. He .delivered a short speech and following the whole army left the place

This battle was also called the battle of al-Ahzab (the parties) because many groups of .the Jews and the nomads of about Mecca and Medina had taken part in this war

Although the Jews had signed previously a defensive contract to guard Medina against dangers, they, as always, had broken their promises and used to send arms to Mecca secretly. They were regularly in treaty with the idolaters; therefore the Muslims could not .find peace of mind

Muhammad (s) decided to bring them down to their knees and eventually declared the .war against them in the year ۷ A.H

The Jews were afraid of the Islam's progress because they were blinded by prejudice .and it also was contrary to their great interests

p: ۲۲

There was a habitable and fortified place at a distance of ٨۶ Km from Medina named .Khaybar. The Jews cultivated the lands around the forts

The Muslims, headed by the Prophet, got at Khaybar and encamped opposite to the forts. .When the Jews knew the matter they ran away into the forts to prepare for the war

.There was a fortified castle, named Qamus, where all the Jews gathered into it

The Muslims were kept on waiting for three weeks to open the fort but they succeeded in .nothing

.Abu-Bakr and Umar started their fight but they were defeated[١]by the Jews

At-Tabari, a Sunni historian, had recorded that when Umar came back from the field he .frightened the Muslims of the bravery of Marhab the commander of the Jews

The Prophet said: "Tomorrow I will give the banner to a man, who loves God and His [messenger and God and His messenger love him too."[٢

On the next day the Prophet sought after Ali (s), who was suffering from a sore-eye. The Prophet prayed Allah so that Imam Ali's eyes might be recovered. Imam Ali became well .immediately

.At last the banner was given to him and he set out for the war

Marhab was the bravest of all the fighters among the Jews. He was well-known for his valor. Ali (s) paced towards the forts and, suddenly the big gate of Qamus was opened .and a few combatants came out

Harith, the brother of Marhab, suddenly cried a terrific cry that the companions of Ali (s) went back a little, but Ali (s) stood against him. They fought each other and finally Harith .was killed by Ali's sword

Now Ali (s) faced Marhab. And as it was at those days Marhab began to recite some epic .verses

[١] Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani in his book Hilyatul Awliya', vol.١ p.p.۶٢, Muhammad ibn Talhah ash-Shafi'ei in his book Matalib as-Su'al p.p.۴, Muhammad ibn Yousuf ash-Shafi'ei in his book Kifayatut Talib chap.١۴, al-Bukhari in his Sahih p.p.١٠٠ and ibnul Hajjaj in his Sahih, .vol.٢ p.p.٣٢۴

[٢] Ahmad's Musnad, ibn Maja's Sunan, Muhammad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji in his Kifayatut Talib chap.١۴, Sheikh Sulayman al-Balkhi al-Hanafi in his book Yanabee'ul Mawadda .chap.۶ and ibn Hajar in his Issaba, vol.٢ p.p.۵٠٨

He said: "As long as Khaybar remembers that I am an experienced man in the war and ."those, who encounter me, will be stained by their own blood

Ali (s), in reply to him, said: "I am a man, whose name is Haydar (that is to say: a lion that ".(attacks repeatedly and will never escape from the hunting-ground

Marhab turned about with his horse to run away because he had heard his Jewish rabbi .saying that he would be killed by a man named Haydar

But he came back towards Ali (s) talking with himself: "There are many "Haydars" in the ".world. It is not certain that this is the very one

Anyhow he was furious because of his brother's death and he wanted to revenge upon Ali (s) but Ali (s) killed him by a sudden push. The Jews fled away into the fort and closed the .door from inside

p: ٢۴

.At last Ali went towards the door and pulled at it by all of his might and threw it aside

In this manner he opened the way for his men to rush into the fort. All castles were opened and many of the Jews were captured. The godly men and the great leaders .treated the powerless and defeated enemy kindly and dispensed them with vengeance

The Prophet of Islam acceded the Jews' request when they asked him to let them remain in the place, provided that they became disarmed, and not to assist the idolaters of Mecca .and to pay the half of their production to the Muslims

There was a productive area near Khaybar called Fadak, about ۱۴۰ km. far from Medina, .where the Jews made a good living by farming. They were in ease and comfort

The Prophet, intending to frustrate any scheme against Islam, sent a word to the dean of the area to be put under the protection of Islam against the invaders. On condition that he would not make any plot against the Muslims and that he would pay the half of the income of their fields to the Islamic government, the Prophet would guarantee the .security of the area

As the religious laws provided, the regions, which were conquered by military forces belonged to the Muslims in general as public purse, but the lands which were taken without expedition and bloodshed belonged to the Prophet himself and then to his rightful .successors

.The Prophet might donate his properties to everyone he liked

p: ۲۵

Some of the Muslim interpreters[١] mentioned that when the verse: (And give to the near of kin his due and to the needy and the wayfarer and do not squander wastefully)[٢] was revealed, the Prophet called for his daughter Fatima and gave her Fadak.

At a later period, she was dispossessed from it at the day of the first caliph Abu-Bakr for certain reasons of political purpose.[٣] Of course the object of the author's intent is not historiography, since this book is about a man of a high rank in Islam, whose deeds and words

[١] Refer to Ath-Tha'labi's Kashful Bayan, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti's Tafseer, vol.۴ p.p.١٧٧ (ad-Durr al-Manthoor), Abul Qassim al-Hasaqani's Tareekh, ibn Katheer's Tareekh, Sheikh Sulayman al-Balkhi's Yanabee'ul Mawadda and ibn Mardwayh's Tafseer.

[٢] Qur'an ١٧:٢۶.

[٣] Ali ibn Burhanuddeen ash-Shafi'ei in his book as-Seera al-Halabiyya, vol.٣ p.p.٣٩١, ibn Abul Hadeed in his Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, Yaqoot al-Hamawi in his Mu'jamul Buldan and as-Samhoodi in Tareekh al-Medina.

were governed by the Islamic principles and Qur'an and he also was attendant with the Prophet step by step since childhood, therefore I have to give the readers some passages of the Islamic history to depict his personality as far as possible.

The battle of Thaat as-Salasil

In the eighth year A.H. a force of twelve thousand men united in a league to attack Medina at night. Their decision was only to kill the Prophet and his minister Ali. Some of the Muslim scholars were under impression that the Prophet was acquainted with the situation by revelation but in the meanwhile the plot was reported to him by some spies, who lived about Mecca.

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The Prophet put the matter before the crowd in the mosque for discussion and then Abu-.Bakr was ordered to fight against them with an army of four thousand strong warriors

Abu-Bakr advanced with his men slowly until they came into view of the enemy. Now two hundred horsemen came before Abu-Bakr and said: "We have prepared for this war just ?"to kill Muhammad or his cousin Ali. What do you mean by bringing this army

Abu-Bakr said: "I have been ordered to propose Islam to you and if you refuse it I will ."fight you

They reviewed their army with its high power and ability and hereby Abu-Bakr was .frightened and decided to go back to Medina

The return of the army, in that bad state, depressed the Prophet deeply. Then Umar was appointed as commander. He also succeeded in nothing and came back in the same state .as Abu-Bakr did

At last Ali ibn Abu-Talib was called upon and after a short discussion with the Prophet he .was ordered to face the enemy

Ali (s), on the contrary to the two previous commanders, carried his men through a short cut with all speed to go unexpectedly upon them. He used to move at night until he came .into sight of the enemy

?"Again two hundred knights came and asked him: "Who are you

He replied: "My name is Ali, the son of Abu-Talib. I invite you to resign yourselves to ".Islam

They said: "You are our aim. We will kill you and your men by all means. The fixed time for ".meeting will be tomorrow at noon

p: ٢٧

Ali (s) said: "What ails you, woe be to you. You threaten me with killing. I will fight you ".tomorrow at the time

In the same evening, according to Ali's command, the Muslims fed their horses and .prepared their defensive position to fight the obstinate enemy

When daybreak appeared, the Muslims offered the prayer with the leadership of Ali (s) .and then they made a sudden attack upon the enemy while it was still dark

The rear guards had not yet entered into the field when a great number of the enemy .was killed by the vanguard and many of them were bound with ropes and chains

The captives with their cattle were carried to Medina. The Prophet, accompanied by the .believers, went out of the city to meet Ali (s) and his honored army

.Ali (s) arrived at Medina, amid acclamation of the crowd, with a great deal of spoils of war

The above tradition was quoted from the reliable sources of the Shia. It was somehow .different from what the Sunni scholars had mentioned

The residential quarters of the enemy were stony places that there were sparks arising .when the horses' hooves hit the stones. The horses were gasping too

This self-sacrifice was so worthy of praise that a surah was revealed from the Heaven about this feat and other devoted soldiers. The Holy Qur'an says: (I swear by the runners breathing pantingly, then those that produce fire striking, then those that make raids at morn, then thereby raise dust, then rush thereby upon an assembly. Most surely man is .ungrateful to his Lord) ۱۰۰:۱-۶

p: ۲۸

.(Most of the commentators believed that this surah was revealed to praise Ali (s

The battle of Mu’tah

There was somewhat a peaceful time all over Arabia at the beginning of the eighth year of Hijrah. Neither the Jews in the north nor the idolaters of Mecca caused any threat to .the Muslims

At the same time something happened that made the Prophet (s) dispatch a force .towards the frontier countries of Syria

The Prophet had sent to Damascus a man for preaching but before getting there he was killed by a frontier official. At the same time sixteen persons, who had gone there for the same purpose, were killed in that area. The place where they were killed in was called .Mu’tah

A host of three thousand men set out to Mu’tah to avenge the murder of the killed .(persons under the command of Ja’far the full brother of Ali (s

The Prophet delivered a short speech in the camp. He said: “You are going to the same place where your brothers have been killed. You go ahead and invite them to believe in God. If they do not refuse you should dispense with the revenge, otherwise you fight them for the sake of Allah to punish God's enemies. But remember that you are not to disturb the monks and nuns, who live away from the social life in monasteries. You are .not to kill children, women and old men. Be careful not to ruin houses and farms

p: ٢٩

The Syrian government was well-informed of the Muslim's bravery and self-sacrifice and .also their success in the war against the Arab tribes

In spite of the fact that these two armies (the Romans and the Muslims) were incomparable in equipments and persons but the Muslims showed an extra sacrifice and .took toll from the enemy

Now some groups of Muslims left the battlefield for a farther place at midnight and decided to call out with the motto of "la ilaha illa (a)llah" (there is no any God but Allah).They hereby made the enemy think that an auxiliary force would come to help the Muslims and consequently the Syrians stopped attacking the Muslims for two days. This .wise tactic helped them to seize the opportunity and to leave the field for Medina

Although the Muslims did not get a good result in this battle, but the fame and reputation .of Islam was trumpeted abroad and it opened a way for next publicities

The great conquest of Mecca

In the same year the Prophet conquered Mecca by his good management without killing .or bloodshed

Mecca was the place where Mohammad and his companions were badly harmed by the idolaters of Koreish since the beginning of the Prophethood and it was a safe place for his enemies to plot against him for more than ten years. Now it became in the Prophet's .control

According to the agreement made before, neither the Muslims nor the idolaters should assist or interfere in the internal affairs of the confederate tribes of each other but they had helped their confederates against the Prophet's allies and consequently many of .them were killed

p: ٣٠

.They asked the Prophet for help to avenge themselves upon the idolaters

On the other hand the people of Koreish had repented of their behavior because their .acts were opposite to the agreement between them

Therefore in order to restrain the Prophet's anger and to strengthen the previous relations, Abu-Sufyan, the chief of Koreish, whose hostile behavior had troubled the Muslims more than ten years, made his mind to go towards Medina to apologize in the presence of the Prophet and meanwhile to give the Muslims a guarantee against any .attack

The Prophet (s) remained silent and did not show any response. Then Abu-Sufyan came .out of the mosque and set out straight to Mecca

Now the Prophet, with the intent of conquering, Mecca had to notify the Muslims of a public mobilization and for this purpose he sent a word to them saying: "Every one, who ".has faith in God, has to arm himself secretly and to be ready for the war

Thereafter many watchmen were put in some places to have control over the roads so .that nobody could carry news to Mecca

Four thousand well-armed men gathered in Medina and a force of six thousand men from .different tribes joined them along the way

The people of Mecca were quite unaware of such an army that was headed by the .Prophet himself and was going to occupy there

Now Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, who was so respected by Koreish, had left Mecca towards Medina. It happened that he met the Prophet in the midway. He had to be in .Mecca because would spy for the Prophet and thereafter he went along with the Prophet

p: ٣١

The Prophet led the Muslims forward until they became near Mecca. In order to frighten the people of Mecca the Prophet ordered his soldier to set fire to some firewood on the .hills

Abbas separated from the Prophet to seek after someone, who could alarm the people of Koreish about the powerfulness and greatness of the Prophet's army and to report to .them that submission would be the only remedy

At the same time Abu-Sufyan was out of Mecca for inquiring into the circumstances of the town. Abbas recognized his voice when he was talking with another man. Abbas called him and said to him quietly: "There are ten thousand armed and armored persons escorting the Prophet. They are at call and ready to devote themselves heartily for the sake of Muhammad. Surely Koreish is not able to stand against them. As you see many dangers impend upon your tribe. You would better go to declare the shahada before the ".Prophet now

Abu-Sufyan accepted it reluctantly but he began to shudder with fear all this while. Abbas, in order to terrify him, took him through the crowd to see the greatness and the glory of the Prophet's army. Finally they were admitted to meet the Prophet. After some words .between them Abu-Sufyan eventually submitted

Hereupon the Prophet declared: "Whoever takes refuge in Kaabah or in Abu-Sufyan's house will be safe. Those, who lay down their arms and announce their impartiality, will ".be in safeguard by the Muslims

Although Abu-Sufyan pretended that he was a Muslim, but in fact he had no faith in Islam. The Prophet made use of that to conquer Mecca without bloodshed because the idolaters of Koreish would never take any decision independently without Abu-Sufyan's .consultation

p: ۳۲

At any rate he went on the errand to put up his perceptions for discussion with Koreish. At first, they did not think that it was true and they reproached him. They insisted on standing against the Muslims but when they received the same news from the others, .they submitted to the truth

At last the Prophet (s) rode on his camel, surrounded by five thousands armed men, and .arrived at Mecca with magnificence beyond description

The people of Mecca had such weak morale that no one could resolve on standing against .the Muslims

Now the Muslims occupied the town, which was the center of polytheism and idolatry for a long time. The Prophet, after a short rest, proceeded on pilgrimage to the great mosque of Kaabah (al-Masjid al-Haram). He, at the first instance, broke up the idols one by one by his lance. Ali (s) helped him all the while. Some big idols were planted above the Kaabah. Ali (s) was ordered to stand up on the blessed shoulders of the Prophet to throw them .down

Certainly Ali was the only one, who won the honor of standing on the shoulders of the .Prophet (s). Then the Prophet faced the people and said: "You did evil to me

You denied my mission. You brought me many troubles and forced me to leave my home for Medina. You very often did not let me be safe. You incited different tribes as well as .the Jews to fight the Muslims and many of them were killed before my eyes

p: ۳۳

Now those present people began to recall their offences. They were talking to themselves: "Certainly he will put us all to the sword or we may be jailed and our wives ".and children may be taken as captives

They were immersed in such thoughts when suddenly the Prophet (s) broke the silence ?"and said: "How do you think about me and what do you say now

The whole people, as one man, replied: "We think highly of you and we do not know any .thing except goodness and favor of you. You are our great and dear brother

The Prophet, who was kind by nature, said: "Now I say just what my brother Josef (the prophet) said to his cruel brothers (as the Holy Qur'an says): (He said: (There shall be) no reproof against you this day; Allah may forgive you, and He is the most Merciful of the .merciful).[۱] I already notify you to go on your living. Now all of you are free

In order to beware that his relatives and kinsmen might misuse his position, the Prophet delivered a short speech among the members of his family. He condemned injustice and unjust discriminations and alluded to the necessity of spreading justice and equity among all the classes of people. He said: "O sons of Hashim,[۲] I am the messenger of God to all human beings. No family relation has any effect on one's

punishment on the Day of Resurrection. Everybody will be answerable for his own acts. ".Being of my relatives won't be of any use for you

p: ۳۴

.The Holy Qur'an ۱۲:۹۲ [۱]

.(It was the great grandfather of the Prophet (s ۲]

The Prophet's historical speech in Kaabah

A great crowd of the people of Mecca and the new comers had been gathered in the mosque when the Prophet (s) determined on giving a lecture to show the people a glimpse of Islam.

At that time one of the greatest and rooted bigotry of the Arab society was self-glorification or being related to a well-known tribe such as Koreish. The Prophet, in order to overthrow these bad traditions, said to the people: "O people, God wanted to remove haughtiness, selfishness and self-glorification among you by revealing Islam. Verily you were descended from Adam and Adam was created of mud. The best of you is that, who avoids sins."

.This saying meant that the bases of superiority and personality were virtue and purity

Then he added: "O people, being Arab is not the ground of personality and it is not an integral part of your nature but it is only a speaking language. It doesn't benefit you in the afterlife if you leave your duties. You will never attain your personal merit by self-glorification of being related to certain ancestors but by spreading equity and justice among mankind. In order to spread equality between the blacks and the whites, the Prophet added: "In fact people are like the teeth of a comb. There is no superiority for the Arabs to the non-Arabs or for the whites to the blacks. The basis of supremacy is virtuousness. The whole human beings are identical with each other before God. The best one is that, who renounces disobeying God."

p: ۳۵

The Prophet thereby cancelled all formal distinctions and being proud of parentage. He said: "The whole human beings are descended from Adam and Adam had been created of ".mud by The Supreme creator

The battle of Hunayn

Now the most tribes of Arabia had turned Muslims except two tribes; Thaqeef and Hawazin. They were strong enough and had resided about Ta'if, a country place in the east and north east of Mecca. When they knew that the Muslims had conquered Mecca, they decided to attack it before the Prophet would declare war against them. The matter was reported to the Prophet (s) by the spies; therefore he set out towards them with a .strong army of twelve thousand men

Some other Arab families joined Thaqeef and Hawazin. They were about thirty thousand men accompanied by their households and cattle. They came to a wide area named Hunayn. The Muslims had to pass a narrow valley to get to Hunayn. The enemy came down from the rear mouth of the valley and hid themselves behind big stones and rocks .in the slopes

When the Muslims came in sight, the enemy attacked them by a shower of stones and .arrows

.Consequently the Muslims were frightened. They escaped and left the Prophet alone

Only a few ones; Ali (s), Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, ibn Harith, the Prophet's cousin, Al-Fadhl ibn Abbas and Abdullah ibn Mas'ud stood against the enemy before the Prophet (s). .(The historians mentioned that forty warriors had been killed by Ali(s

p: ۳۶

A gigantic man, mounting on a red camel and trying from behind to send the Muslims into troubles, came to face Ali (s). Ali (s) at first cut off his camel's leg and then halved him into .two by his sword

The Prophet (s) and his uncle Abbas called repeatedly upon the runaways to come back to .the field. They came back and forced the enemy to retreat and to run away towards Ta'if

The Muslims gained great spoils; forty thousand sheep, twenty-four thousand camels, a .good quantity of silverwares and six thousand persons as captives

The Muslims chased the runaway enemy unto Ta'if but they had to waste a long time in order to conquer its strong fort. Hereon, they, according to the Prophet's command, went .back to Medina for performing other essential affairs

The battle of Tabouk

When Islam appeared there were two great powers on this side of the earth; the Romans .and the Persians

The Roman soldiers were well experienced in the wars and at the same time, they had won the war against Iran. Syria and the eastern parts of the Mediterranean were the colonies of Rome, under the Byzantine rule. There was a fortress at the boundary between Syria and the land of Hijr named Tabouk, which the Prophet of Islam had come .to conquer it

The quick growth and the splendid conquests of the Muslims in Arabia had made the Emperor of Rome seek a remedy to stem the tide of Islam's progress. He was afraid especially of Mohammad's influence upon people. Therefore the Romans decided to harass the Muslims in order to be safe from their troubles. Such news was carried to .Medina by some commercial caravans

p: ۳۷

The Prophet sent someone to Mecca and about Medina to call every one, who had faith in God, to gather in Medina in order to be ready for the war. This invitation gained ready acceptance of the Muslims. About thirty thousand persons gathered to fight the enemy. This expedition was very difficult for the Muslims because the weather was too hot and they had to go for a long distance through a torrid zone to Tabouk where the Romans encamped. It was also the time of harvest and they would have to harvest their farms' .products

There were some hypocrites among the Prophet's companions, who used to injure the Muslims by sabotage. They tried to discourage people with various excuses, like the hotness, the too far distance and the huge numbers of the enemy, but their attempt was .in vain

When they knew that the Prophet had decided to set out to the battlefield, they planned to rush upon his house in Medina during his absence. The Prophet (s) perceived their plan and determined to leave Ali (s) as his successor in Medina to safeguard his family. The .Prophet got ready for the task of Tabouk

The hypocrites were displeased with the stay of Ali (s) in Medina; therefore they began to spread false rumors such as that Ali was ordered to take part in this troublesome war but he refused because this war was really insupportable and that the Prophet (s) was .displeased with him

Ali (s), in order to rebut this accusation, told the Prophet (s) of what they rumored and .asked him to let him go to the war

p: ۳۸

The Prophet said to Ali (s): "O my brother, go back to Medina because nobody else is well-qualified to keep Medina safe except I and you. You are to take care of my house during my absence." Then he added: "Are you not satisfied to be to me as Aaron was to Moses? ".But there will be no prophet after me

This Prophet's word is also one of the main arguments of the Shia in proving the .immediate succession of Imam Ali after the Prophet's death

Finally the Prophet's men, with troubles beyond endurance, arrived at Tabouk. It was a .surprise to them when they saw no enemy soldiers in and about Tabouk

They thought that that the enemy might go back or that the whole information that the .Prophet was told of was false

The Prophet (s) stopped there about twenty days and received no news about the enemy. At the same time he was in contact with the chieftains of various tribes and he made treaty with them, because they were mostly Christians and it was possible that the .Romans would make use of them in the future

.The Prophet, after consulting with his companions, came back towards Medina

Although some hypocrites resolved upon killing him on his way back by stampeding his .camel in the slope of a valley, their plan was surfaced and the Prophet saved his life

Although this expedition did not get any result but it made everyone understand that the power of Islam had got to an extent that the Muslims could fly to arms and defy the great powers like the Romans. Consequently many headstrong chiefs of the Arab tribes came .near the Prophet and resigned themselves to God and believed in him

p: ۳۹

On the other hand the Muslims proved by experience that they could resist difficulties .when they would set out to conquer Syria in the future

Declaration of immunity for the idolaters

At the end of the ninth year of Hijrah, Gabriel came down from the Heaven with some verses of the Holy Qur'an and hereby the Prophet was ordered to send some one to Mecca in order to inform the people of the purport of the verses, which had four orders to .be declared

:The verses are

This is a declaration of) immunity by Allah and His apostle towards those of the)-۱ .idolaters with whom you made an agreement

So go about in the land for four months and know that you can not weaken Allah and-۲ .that Allah will bring disgrace to the unbelievers

And an announcement from Allah and His apostle to the people on the day of the-۳ greater pilgrimage that Allah and His apostle are free from liability to the idolaters; therefore if you repent, it will be better for you, and if you turn back, then know that you .will not weaken Allah; and announce painful punishment to those, who disbelieve

Except those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement, then they have not-۴ failed you in anything and have not backed up any one against you, so fulfill their agreement to the end of their term; surely Allah loves those who are careful (to their .(duty

So when the sacred months have passed away, then slay the idolaters wherever you -۵ find them and take them captives and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush, then if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, leave their way .free to them, surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful

p: ۴۰

:The Charter was as follows

.It was forbidden for the idolaters to go nakedly around the Kaabah-۱

.The idolaters would not have the right to enter into the sacred places-۲

No one of the idolaters would have the right to take part in the ceremonies of the-۳ .greater Hajj

The lives and the wealth of those, who have concluded the peace contract and have not-۴ .broken their promises, would be protected until the end of the contract

The Prophet sought after Abu-Bakr and gave him the verses of the Holy Qur'an enclosed with the charter to announce them to the unbelievers of Mecca. He set out towards Mecca with forty persons. Then Gabriel came down and said to the Prophet: "O Muhammad, either you yourself or the nearest one to you of your family ought to ".perform this task

The Holy Qur'an says: (Nor does he (the Prophet) speak out of desire. It is naught but .revelation that is revealed, the Lord of Mighty Power has taught him) ۵۳:۳-۵

Imam Ali (s) was ordered by the Prophet to set out to Mecca to follow after Abu-Bakr in order to take the verses from him and that he (Imam Ali) himself should inform of the .declaration on the day of the greater Hajj

The task was fulfilled well by Imam Ali (s) in the place where many houses had lost one or .two persons in the wars by his sword

Many groups of the idolaters were directed to godliness by this declaration as the idolatry .was rooted up allover Arabia before the end of the tenth year A.H

p: ۴۱

The first meeting with the Christians

There was a flourishing country between Arabia and Yemen named Najran where the Christians were living at that time. The Prophet of Islam sent a letter to them for preaching purposes like the letters that had been sent to the rulers of the adjoining countries formerly. The bishop of Najran named Abu Harithah put the matter for discussion before the great religionists. A man of mind and intelligence named Shurahbeel in reply to the bishop said: "We have heard our religious leaders saying that someday the Prophethood would be transferred from Isaac's generation to the sons of Ishmael and we should not be surprised that Muhammad (s), who was one of descendants of Ishmael, might be the very Prophet, whom our fore great religionists had informed of. I propose that a mission of some wise men are to be sent to Medina to ".consider what Muhammad (s) claims. It seems to be reasonable

The mission arrived at Medina and went straight to the mosque. The Prophet, contrary to his custom that was accessible to every one, did not pay attention to them because they had dressed up in expensive cloths inlaid with gold. They had golden rings and chains on their fingers and necks. They were directed to Imam Ali (s) to answer their questions. Imam Ali (s) advised them to change their clothes and to take off the golden ornaments .and then they might have the honor of meeting the Prophet

On the next day the Prophet welcomed them warmly and then they began their :negotiation. The argument was as the following

p: ۴۲

The Prophet: I just summon you to monotheism and I want you to obey God and to put .His commandments into practice

The mission: If Islam invited people to godliness recently, it was a long time that we have .worshipped God and His obedience was obligatory on us

The Prophet: How do you obey the unique God whereas you pay homage to the cross and ?you pretend that God has begotten a son

The mission: We worship Jesus as a God because he had restored dead persons to life and he had cured sick and paralytic people. He made some birds of mud and made them .fly. He could do all these things

The Prophet: No, it is not right. Jesus Christ was a sincere servant of God and he was put into the womb of Holy Mary. This miracle was done by the Divine will to make people .believe in Him

The mission: Since nobody had married his mother, hereon God would certainly be his .father

A Qur'anic verse was revealed at this moment; (Surely the likeness of Issa (Jesus) is with Allah as the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then He said to him: Be, and he .was) ۳:۵۹

The Prophet: The situation of Holy Christ is similar to Adam, whom Allah has created him without parents. If non-existence of the father is the reason of Godhead, so Adam must .be obeyed as God since long ago

Anyhow this disputation did not come to a conclusion and they resolved that both sides .should pray God that curse be upon the obstinate side

p: ۴۳

At the same time the Prophet was inspired by a verse: (But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say: Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars) ۳:۶۱.

The two parties made ready to determine the matter of praying for the curse of Allah to be on each other next day to show which party was right.

The heads of the Christians said to each other: "Before we face the Prophet let us see that if he comes with his companions and chief commanders of his army, surely he is a liar but if he brought his dear relatives, he has confidence in God and he is really a truthful person in his claims because he is ready to take his nearest kinfolk towards mortality."

The Prophet of Islam selected four persons from his own family, who were the elects among all the Muslims; Fatima his honorable daughter as his woman, and her two sons Hasan and Hussein as his own sons, and her dear husband Imam Ali (s) as the nearest man to him. Next day when the Christians saw the Prophet coming with his family, they were surprised at the full and were convinced that God would respond to his prayer.

At last the Christians did not agree to damn each other and it was decided that they were to pay a tribute to the Muslims in lieu of protecting their lives and wealth by the Islamic government from foreign aggressions.

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Many of Islamic scholars mentioned the said tradition and concluded that God has .(created them both Muhammad (s) and Ali from one essence (nature

The last Prophet's pilgrimage to Mecca

Hajj is a collective ritual that is fulfilled by the Muslims with the intent of achieving unity .and accord among them

This Islamic congress is effective on strengthening the relations among the Muslims to solve the difficulties by cooperation and helping each other to better their political economical relations. But, regretfully, nowadays the Muslims do not get the benefit of what the Holy Lawgiver willed for them. It is because of the negligence of some leaders of .the Islamic countries

At any rate, according to the Prophet's command, all the tribes of Arabia were informed .that if they wished to take part in hajj with the Prophet they should gathered in Medina

It was a didactic journey, neither military nor politico-economic. The Prophet gave his .(noteworthy lecture to the people when he arrived at Arafat (a sacred place in Mecca

I think it is necessary to show the readers some passages of it because it indicates the .rights and the duties of people towards each other. It is still new after fourteen centuries

The Prophet said: "O people, listen to me; you will never see me here again. Be careful not to trample upon other's rights. You have to regard the lives and the properties of people. You have not to pursue anybody for spite and vengeance. Killing and marauding, which occurred frequently before the advent of Islam must be forgotten forever. It is important for you to know that usury is an ill-gotten profit in Islam and the wealth which has been obtained by this way should be paid back to their owners. Surely the usurer will be ".punished hard on the Day of Resurrection

p: ۴۵

Then he added: "You have to note that husbands have a prerogative upon their wives that should be considered by women and husbands ought to treat their wives kindly. Wives are a deposit from God near husbands. You have to administer justice among them .and be true to your promise in regard to your wives

You, men, have also the rights on your wives. They are not to receive any one in their houses without your permission. They must not commit any offence in the absence of their husbands. You, the husbands, have to provide for your wives safety and welfare if they turned back from the wrong way. You are hereby notified that all the queer habits ".and opinions of the pagan age are cancelled and I do warn you of their falseness

Finally the rite of hajj came to an end and the Muslims learnt its formalities, in general and particular, at the presence of the Prophet. They determined on going back towards .Medina

The story of Ghadir Khumm

The Prophet, on his way back, got at a place named Ghadir Khumm where the Arab tribes .separated from each other to start off towards their dwellings

At this time a verse was revealed to the Prophet saying: (O Apostle, deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message, and Allah will protect you from the people; surely Allah will not guide the .unbelieving people) ۵:۶۷

p: ۴۶

The verse purported that the Prophet (s) had been charged with a great duty previously .but he was afraid of people's mischief to reveal it

The Prophet ordered that those, who had gotten ahead, to come back and those, who .were late to hurry to the place

When all the pilgrims gathered, the Prophet went up a pulpit, which was made of camels' saddles. After praising God he said: "Am I not closer to you than you to yourselves?" These saying indicated to the Holy Qur'anic verse: (The Prophet is closer to the Believers ".than their own selves) ۳۳:۶. The present people said: "Yes, you are

Afterward the Prophet grasped Ali (s) by the arm and said: "Whomsoever I am his ".guardian, here is Ali to be his guardian

Then he prayed to God and said: "O Allah, be a supporter of whoever supports him (Ali) and an enemy of whoever opposes him". He added: "I and Ali have come into being from ".the same origin but the others have come from different origins

Imam Ali (s) was hereby introduced as the Prophet's successor and all those present people, who were more than one hundred thousand, congratulated him and shook hands with him especially Umar ibn al-Khattab, rejoiced more than the others. He said to Ali: "`Well-done, well-done! You became my guardian and the guardian of every believing ".man and believing woman

More than three hundred and fifty great Sunni scholars[۱] mentioned this tradition. Some .of them researched this subject in independent books

p: ۴۷

Al-Fakhr ar-Razi in his book Mafateeh al-Ghayb, ath-Tha'labi in his Kashful Bayan, [۱] Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti in his ad-Durr al-Manthoor, Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani in his Hilyatul Awliya', Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his Musnad, ibnul Maghazili in his Manaqib, at-Tabari in his .al-Wilaya, Ahmad

When those formalities of allegiance were finished, a verse was revealed: (This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, and fear Me. This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you .Islam as a religion) ۵:۳

Some scholars thought that this verse was revealed when the hajj was all over in Mecca but some others[۱] thought that it was revealed in Ghadir Khumm to show the willingness .of God in appointing Imam Ali (s) as the leader of the believers after the Prophet

According to the Shia opinion, the imamate (caliphate after the Prophet) is a divine rank and as the prophets were chosen among the best and wisest people, the imam also .should be chosen in the same way among the innocent and pious men

The caliph must be able to clarify the vague problems and could answer the scientific questions of religion, which were brought forth for discussion, without falling into error, .because the caliphate was indeed an integral part of the prophethood

.Therefore God knew better which one was well-qualified to the task

The said tradition and the following short

story are convincing evidences for the Shia to prove the immediate succession of Imam .Ali (s) after the Prophet's death

p: ۴۸

One day a beggar came into the mosque of Medina and asked for alms. He repeated his request several times but no one granted him anything.

ibn Muhammad al-Koofi (ibn Oqda) in his al-Wilaya, ibn Haddad al-Hasakani in his al-Wilaya and many others.

[۱] Abul qassim al-Hasakani in his book Shawahid at-Tanzeel, sibt ibn aj-Jawzi in his Khawass al-Umma and Abu Sa'eed as-Sajistani in his al-Wilaya.

Imam Ali (s) stretched his finger out while he was kneeling in offering prayer so that the beggar would take Imam Ali's ring off his finger.

Just then a verse was revealed: (Only Allah is your lord and His apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow)[۱] ۵:۵۵.

Now by taking into consideration this Qur'anic verse and the Prophet's clear and decisive words in Ghadir Khumm, we knew that Imam Ali (s) was the rightful heir and legal successor of the Prophet (s).

Of course there are many other crucial evidences in this regard through the Holy Qur'an and the other reliable sources but this matter cannot be contained by this book and it needs an independent book by itself.

Notes:

[۱] Al-Fakhr ar-Razi in his Tafseer, vol.۳ p.p.۴۳۱, Abu Ishaq ath-Tha'labi in his Kashful Bayan, az-Zamakhshari in his Kashshaf, vol.۱ p.p.۴۲۲, at-Tabari in his Tafseer vol.۶ p.p.۱۸۶, ibn Abu Shayba al-Koofi in his Tafseer, an-Nassa'ie in his Sahih, Muhammad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji ash-Shafi'ei in his Kifayatut Talib, ibn as-Sabbagh al-Maliki in his al-Fussool al-Muhimma p.p.۱۲۳ and many others.

p: ۴۹

The Prophet becomes ill

After the battle of Tabouk, the Prophet always felt that there was a danger coming from the Roman Empire and that he was about to fight them; therefore he got ready for the war and ordered the Muslims; Muhajirun and Ansar, [۱] to encamp out of Medina under .the leadership of Usamah ibn Zayd

Some of the great companions, like Abu-Bakr, Umar and Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah, were specially ordered to join the camp but the Prophet was suddenly attacked by fever .and had to be confined to bed

The commandership of Usamah was insupportable to some great companions because he was a young man of twenty years old but his prudence and wisdom was confirmed by .the Prophet

The social positions in Islam depended upon prudence and personal ingenuity and not on .eldership and seniority

In spite of the Prophet's insistence on them to set out to Syria they did not do. It seemed that some secret hands interfered to stop the movement of the army because as soon as they knew that the Prophet was bedridden, they all left the camp with the pretext of .visiting him

As it was said before that the Prophet did not present Imam Ali as his successor for fear .of people's mischief until a verse to be revealed that God would guarantee his security

He anticipated that some of his companions might put obstacles in the way of Imam Ali; hereon he ordered them strictly to set out towards Syria. But a few politicians would not obey him under various pretexts. They even tried to make the Prophet change his mind .with regard to Imam Ali (s). The future events would justify this matter

p: ۵۰

One day when some of the believers gathered around his bed, the Prophet, after pondering, said to his companions: “Bring me an inkpot with a piece of paper to write you “.a decree. If you keep to it, you will never go astray after me at all

Umar, who became a caliph later on, said: “Illness has overcome him and he is just raving. [The Holy Qur’an is sufficient to us.”[۲

Then a quarrel happened among the companions. Some of them said that it was necessary to bring a piece of paper and an inkpot but the others, who were on Umar’s .side, refused

It is too indecent to mention the words that were exchanged among them. It was enough that some bad words were heard by the Prophet that he turned his face away from his .companions

The Prophet, in order to put an end to this jangle, decided to go to the mosque to say to .the people orally about the decree he ordered them to write

He got at the mosque infirmly as he had leaned on the shoulders of Imam Ali (s) and his .cousin al-Al-Fadhl ibn al-Abbas and his feet were draggling on the earth

.The people were impatiently waiting for hearing his last words

After praising God he said: “I leave two great and dear things among you; the Holy Qur’an [and my family. If you keep to them, you will never go astray.”[۳

It was mentioned by al-Asqalani that the Prophet turned his face to his followers, who had formed a circle around his bed and said; “My death is coming soon and I just leave two profound things among you; the first is

the Qur'an and the second is my family." Then he raised Ali's hand and said: "Ali (s) keeps to the Qur'an and the Qur'an will never be separated from him." (They are correlative .(with each other

While the Prophet was sick he advised people to keep to prayers and recommended them to be fair dealing with the slaves and their rights. Then he added that his traditions and Sunnah should not be forgotten after him and the Muslims, when having problems and difficulties, should turn to his family. Obeying his family was obligatory for the Muslims. Then he continued: "They (his family) are the wisest among all of you and be careful not to [try to teach them anything. Know that Ali (s) will be my successor after my death."[۴

At last he sought after Ali (s) and whispered to him for a while and then he went to the [better world while his blessed head was in Ali's lap.[۵

Later on Imam Ali (s) said: "The Prophet, at the last moments of his life, whispered and taught me one thousand chapters of science; each one of them contained one thousand chapters. The above mentioned matters indicated that Imam Ali (s) was well-qualified for .the task of the caliphate

The generalities of the Qur'an just explain precepts and religious jurisprudence in general and ordinary people cannot interpret them easily. The Prophet said: "Ali is the best and the wisest of you all and he is the best of you in judgment. Rejecting his sayings means [rejecting my sayings. Refuting my sayings means denying God's precepts."[۶

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Muhajirun: the first Muslims, who emigrated from Mecca to Medina at the beginning of ۱] the Islamic mission. Ansar: the people of Medina, who believed in the Prophet and .assisted him and his companions

Refer to al-Bukhari's Sahih, vol.۱۲ p.p.۱۷۸, Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj's book al-Wassiyya, [۲] Ahmad's Musnad, vol.۱ p.p.۱۲۲, Imam al-Ghazaly in his Sirrul Aalameen, ibn Hajar in his .Sawa'iq and many others

Refer to Muslim's Sahih, vol.۷ p.p.۱۲۲, at-Tarmithi's Sunan, vol.۲ p.p.۳۰۷, an-Nassa'ie's [۳] .Khassa'iss, Ahmad's Musnad, vol.۱,۳,۴,۵ p.p.۱۴, ۲۶, ۵۹, ۱۸۲ and many others Sunni scholars

Refer to al-Bayhaqi's Manaqib, al-Khawarizmi's Manaqib and ibnul Maghazili's [۴] .Manaqib

Refer to al-Hakim an-Nayshaboori's Manaqib vol.۳ p.p.۱۳۹, Ahmad ibn Hanbal's Musnad [۵] '.vol.۳ and Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani's Hilyatul awliya

Refer to Ahmad's Musnad, al-Khawarizmi's Manaqib and sayyid Ali al-Hamadani's [۶] .Mawaddatul Qurba

The disputes in the Saqeefah

[The disputes in the Saqeefah[۱

Saqeefah was a big shed where the Ansar (the local citizens of Medina) would gather to .discuss the public affairs and occasionally they would appoint chieftains of local families

After the Prophet's death, the Ansar formed a meeting to discuss the subject of his .successor

Sa’d ibn Ubadah, who was one of the Prophet’s great companions and an important man .in his tribe, was nominated by his tribe the Khazraj

There was another tribe in Medina named Aws. A state of war was between these two .tribes since a long time ago. There was still a great enmity between them at this time

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The Aws naturally did not show any favor for this candidate and they opposed they .Khazraj

While they were arguing with each other, suddenly three men of Muhajirun; Abu-Bakr, .Umar and Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah came into the Saqeefah

At first Umar stood up to speak but Abu-Bakr prevented him and he himself said: "We, the Muhajirun, believed in Mohammad and worshipped God before all of you. We are Mohammad's friends and relatives; therefore these privileges and attributes are quite ".enough for us to take the reins of government

Then a man from the Ansar, named Habbab, turned towards his family and said: "O people of Ansar, do not surrender to them. We, the Ansar, have also some other precedence over them. We are men of wealth, honor and a great tribe. We gave them shelter in our homes. Islam progressed by our sword. You should stick to your right ".severely. One emir is to be from us and one is to be from them

Umar stood up and said: "It is not possible to have two rulers in the same time. By Allah, the Arabs will not be contented to have a ruler from you, the Ansar, whereas the Prophet (s) is not from your family; therefore the caliph must be from his own family. Whoever ".opposes us, will do wrong and will commit a sin, which leads to perdition

Habbab stood up again and repeated the same words as before but he was scolded by .Umar severely

p: ۵۴

Then Abu 'Ubaydah stood up and said; "You, the Ansar, helped and supported us in different ways and now we expect that you do not change your behavior." But the Ansar .did not accord to the Muhajirun

The situation was going to an end in the interest of the Ansar, but suddenly Basheer, one of the Khazraj, stood up and said: "Although we reinforced Islam and supported you, Muhajirun, but our purpose was obeying Allah and His apostle. It does not make us put obstacles in the way of the caliphate. Muhammad (s) was from Koreish. Koreish has the ".right to get this position and Koreish suffices for it

When Basheer finished his speech, the dispute reached a high point among the Ansar. The Muhajirun took advantage of this tumult and seized the opportunity. Umar and Abu 'Ubaydah ran towards Abu-Bakr and paid homage to him as caliph, and then Basheer al-Ansari and his family resigned themselves to Abu-Bakr. In this way Abu-Bakr became the .(caliph after the Prophet (s

Surprising it is! The Muhajirun, because of their precedence in Islam and worshipping God and their kinship with the Prophet as they pretended, disqualified the Ansar but they did not talk about Imam Ali (s), who was the true successor for the same reasons. He was the first man, who believed in Muhammad, the first one, who offered prayer behind the Prophet and he, on the contrary to the other Prophet's companions, had never [worshipped idols.[١

It was surprising indeed when the Ansar were beaten in the debate of kinship with the Prophet and submitted to the Muhajirun whereas Abu-Bakr related to the Prophet through his seventh great grandfather and Umar related to the Prophet through his ninth great grandfather but they ignored Imam Ali (s), who was so closer to the Prophet that he .was a full - blood cousin

p: ۵۵

:Notes

Saqeefah means a shed [۱]

It was mentioned by Abul Qassim al-Hasakani, Ahmad in his Musnad, al-Khawarizmi in [۲] his Manaqib, Sulayman al-Balkhi al-Hanafi in his Yanabee'ul Mawadda chap.۱۲, ibn Abul Hadeed in Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, p.p.۳۷۵-۳۷۷,۳۸۸, an-Nassa'ei, Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani, .ath-Tha'labi, ibnul Maghazili and many other Sunni scholars in their books

Imam Ali stays at home

It was said beforehand that many great men of Mecca, especially those who had grudge against Muhammad (s) obstinately, were killed in the battle of Badr by the sword of Imam Ali and that there were a few houses that did not lose a relative by Ali's sword; therefore .they were not so pleased with him

On the other hand, many notable companions of the Prophet (s) were jealous of him because of his great valor for Islam, especially because that he was highly esteemed by .the Prophet. Therefore these reasons made him stay at home

Abu-Sufyan was the leader of the commercial caravans of Koreish before the advent of Islam. He carried on trade between Mecca and Syria. After the battle of Badr he was the commander of all the expeditions that moved towards Medina fighting against Islam. Finally, in order to save his life, he became a Muslim before the Prophet when Mecca was going to be conquered by the Muslims. He was too much proud and obstinate and he would look down on everybody. He was out of Medina when the Prophet died and as soon as he knew that the Muslims paid homage to Abu-Bakr, he became furious and went, having a proposal, to meet Abbas, the Prophet an Ali's uncle. He said to him: "The people have entrusted the caliphate to Taym (Abu-Bakr's family) neglectfully and they have deprived the Hashemites (the Prophet's family) of their right and then Umar, this hot-tempered of Adiy (Umar's family) will rule over us. Let us go to Ali and ask him to come out ".and get his legal right

p: ۵۶

They came to Imam Ali (s). Abu-Sufyan said to him: "Give me your hand to pay homage to you and if anyone disagrees, I will fill all the streets of Medina with cavalrymen."

This was the best opportunity for Imam Ali (s) if he was greedy for the authority (on the contrary to Umar's saying that Ali was greedy for the caliphate) or if he would have liked to submit to his own whim, when Abu-Sufyan, a man of power with the support of his crowding tribe, he would have agreed with him. But Imam Ali (s) did not accede to Abu-Sufyan's request because:

۱. His proposal was not based on religious feelings and what had made him to offer this proposition was only partisanship for his family and tribe. He was, by nature, a wicked man and Imam Ali (s) knew him well.

۲. In this present situation if Medina became the center of a civil war and the place of a dispute for the caliphate, then most people, very likely, would apostatize and consequently the name of Islam would be forgotten for ever.

۳. The dissent which arose between the Ansar and the Muhajirun concerning the caliphate was an occasion for the hypocrites to abolish Islam by mischief and talebearing.

Therefore Imam Ali (s) preferred to wait for a good opportunity when the circumstances would become suitable. For this reason he did not give his hand to receive homage and Abu-Sufyan was reasoned into compliance.

p: ۵۷

The silence and renouncement of Imam Ali indicated his wise policy to prevent dissent and apostasy among the Muslims. Recently some of Egyptian writers [١] have stated an opinion that, undoubtedly, Imam Ali had preference over all of the other companions from all points of view and they have added that: "If Imam Ali (s) had assumed the rein of government immediately after the Prophet (s), the fate of the Muslims would have been ".much better than what it is today

Mahmood Al-Aqqad wrote in his book Abqariyyatul Imam: "Although the virtuousness, purity, science and merits of Imam Ali (s) was superior to all other companions, the Prophet (s) did not present him clearly as his successor and he granted the authority to the Muslims to choose the caliph." But al-Aqqad ignored that Umar received the caliphate by the will of Abu-Bakr and Umar himself vested this authority with a committee of six .persons

The Islamic scholar, Dr. Kiali Halabi, in his letter to al-Ameeni, the author of al-Ghadir, said: "The history of Arabia is nothing except the history of Islam. The Arabs have neglected their duty to compose and teach their history (Islamic history) because what is taught under the name of Islamic history is neither scientific nor free from partiality and it .is full of private motives

That, which had been written by the historians at the time of the Umayyads and the Abbasids, was not free from showing partial views and most of it had deviated from the truth, because of material interests or for fear of being suppressed by the authority. Moreover, the modern critics are not able to unveil the facts and the real causes of the events and to discover the historical connections among them, whereas the aim and the .required result of history is to discover such causes and connections

p: ٥٨

The world of Islam is always in need of the scientific study of history in order that the Muslims may know what events were behind the great victories achieved at the first part .of the Islamic history and what motives moved them

The Muslims have to know what services the Muslim walis had rendered to the Islamic civilization or what blows they had inflicted upon it. Before all we should know what happenings made the Muslims dissent after the Prophet's death and which party was .right in this discord

What happened to make the Hashemites be deprived of their right? What was the effect ?of Imam Ali's seclusion and satisfaction of educating the Muslims only

When these questions are clarified then what is to be done to achieve the union of the Muslims and to achieve the scientific and politico-economic improvement in the Islamic ?countries and to make use of this improvement

Consequently the new generation can clear up what is dark and vague on the pages of the books history and then to follow the example of the policy and behavior of Imam Ali .(s), the prime example of humanity, and of his dear sons and followers

I think that it is necessary for the Islamic scholars to fulfill this duty. The book al-Ghadir is one of those books that have cleared up the dark corners and the ambiguous sentences of the previous careless writers. It is too regretful that many of the previous historians have turned the historical facts upside down and that they have led the contemporary youths astray in connection with the truths. The new generation should know that the honorable Apostle of Islam had definitely presented Imam Ali (s) as his successor and executor of his will, but his companions forgot it and disregarded the Prophet's orders. If they had submitted to his command, the fate of the Islamic world would have been more ordered than what it is now and that the Muslims would have never been involved in dissent and that their unity and consensus would protect them against calamities. Mohammad, the great educator of mankind, wanted successors having efficiency and power of understanding and having courage and prudence. He wanted such men, who were able to be moderate between worldliness and religiousness with the same spirit as the Prophet had. They should direct the people to the right path of the Qur'an and their conduct must be as that of peacemakers. The guardian of the Prophet must be a man,

who would never forget rightfulness and the way of God when judging; a man, who would never be feeble when walking in the right way and in achieving justice whether towards his relatives or the others, a man, who-at the time of failure or prevalence-would be masterful against the oppressors and very kind to the helpless, a man, who would be able to decide upon any subject according to wisdom and rightfulness and to be far away .from his own desires

p: ۵۹

But regretfully, it must be said that the Arabs missed the only historical opportunity they had and they did opposite to the Prophet's will; therefore Islam's losses were great and .beyond description

Islam, at the beginning of its growth, missed all creative power because of disputes and fights, whereas the Muslims could conquer the entire world during a half of the first .century of Islam's inception if they had not struggled against each other

Now it is necessary for the Islamic scholars to unveil the historical facts and to define the causes of the events and after coming to a reasonable conclusion, they must show the unaware Muslims the deeds, the conduct and the speeches of Imam Ali(s), the best example of humanity. They have to state properly the life and guardianship of the .Prophet's successor and cousin

Which story is more pleasant than the biography of a man, who lived for the divinity and for spreading the religion of God and who did his best to direct his fellow men to the right path and in the meantime he did not refuse to guide the men of authority (the caliphs .Abu-Bakr and Umar) sincerely

His manly qualities and morals should be emphasized because he was the prime example of Mohammedanism. God had granted him science, ability of interpreting the divine laws and eloquence. He was really the sword of the Prophet against the enemies. He was a .man of iron, whose stability and firmness would not become shaky by greed or threat

p: ۶۰

He is the Imam, whom we are bound to love and follow. The Holy Qur'an says: (Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives) ۴۲:۲۳. God had purified .Imam Ali and his dear sons of every sin

Nowadays, the world of Islam is seriously in need of knowing the characteristics of this great personage to be taken as a guide and an example. The Muslims have to know that the peerless qualities and spiritual particulars of Imam Ali (s) are the best stimulus for the .youths allover the Islamic countries to solve their problems and corruptions

It is the duty of the Islamic scholars to imitate the writer of al-Ghadir to purify history of the blemishes those previous historians stained it with and to show the glorious life of the ".Prophet's successor

:Notes

Abdul Fattah Maqsood and Ala'uddeen Karaka, the professors of al-Azhar University, [۱] .as it was published in Sa'd Magazine and al-Ahram Newspaper

The caliphate of Abu-Bakr

Abu-Bakr was one of the Prophet's great companions. He was the prophet's pal in the cave at the night of emigration. He controlled all the affairs of the state as it was mentioned before. Some of the great companions, who were about nine persons, [remonstrated against but he did not heed.[۱

On the next day, nineteen persons made a protest against him in the mosque but he had [no any evidence from the Prophet to go upon.[۲

It is to be noted that Abu-Bakr decided to deprive Fatima, the holy daughter of the Prophet, of her property of Fadak.[۳] Fadak was donated to Fatima by her father when a .Qur'anic verse was revealed

The Holy Qur’an says: (Whatever Allah has restored to His Apostle from them, you did not press forward against it any horse or a riding camel, but Allah gives authority to His Apostle against whom he pleases, and Allah has power over all things. Whatever Allah has restored to His Apostle from the people of the towns, it is for Allah and for the Apostle and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarers, so that it may not be a thing taken by turns among the rich of you …) ۵۹:۶-۷.

[After the revelation of this verse, the Prophet donated Fadak to Fatima.[۴

The caliphate of Abu-Bakr lasted for two years and four months. Syria was conquered by the Muslims at his days.

Notes:

[۱] Refer to al-Fakhr ar-razi in his Tafseer, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti in his Tareekh al-Kulafa', ibn Abul Hadeed in Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, at-Tabari in Tareekh al-Islam, Muhammad Khawand Shah in his Rawdhatus Safa, ibn Abdul Birr in al-Istee'ab, Muslim, al-Bukhari, al-Asqalani and al-Balathiri.

[۲] Ibid.

[۳] It was a village near Medina, which the Prophet had donated to his daughter Fatima (s).

[۴] Refer to ath-Tha'labi's Kashful Bayan, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti's Tafseer, vol.۴, ibn Katheer's Tareekh, al-Balkhi's Yanabee'ul Mawadda, al-Hakim al-Hasakani's Tareekh, ibn Mardwayh's Tafseer and al-Muttaqi al-Hindi's Kanzul Ummal.

The caliphate of Umar

Umar, according to the will of Abu-Bakr, dressed himself with the caliphate. He was a severe man. He would put the religious punishments into practice carefully and he had, personally, a careful control over the state affairs.

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No one of his officers dared to misappropriate funds in his administrative charge or to make use of their positions unlawfully because he was too strict with the expenses of .(Bayt al-Mal (public treasury

The Islamic conquests began to expand on all sides and consequently spoils and wealth were brought to Medina. The caliph used to keep the companions in Medina not to let .them be affected by bad habits

He always opposed bringing books from the conquered countries. He said: "These books are surplus to our requirements while the Qur'an is with us." He ordered to burn those .books

But Imam Ali (s) often said to his followers: "Bring knowledge home even if it is in remote ".places

I just quote a wise saying of Imam Ali (s) from Nahj al-Balighah where he says: "It is odd to the character of a liberal man to flatter or to be envious of the others except in ".searching for knowledge

.Of course these two ideas of the two caliphs are so contrary to each other

Although the people were kept away from Imam Ali's teachings and attainments but he was often asked for giving legal advices by the caliphs, in order to put the state affairs in [good order or to correct their judgments about the religious laws.[١

When Khuzestan (the southern part of Iran) was conquered by the Muslims, the wali .named Hormozan and his slave Abu-Lu'lu' were brought to Medina as captives

Umar donated the slave to al-Mugheerah, who was a versed politician among the Arabs and he was close to the rulers. Abu Lu'lu', as a functionary, was not paid his due wages by his master. He complained to the caliph Umar about it but the caliph did not pay any attention to him. He pleaded with justice repeatedly over and again but Umar did not take .it seriously

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It reminds of a saying of Imam Ali (s), who often said to his followers: "You have to pay the laborer his wages before his sweat dries." He also said: "Receive people humbly. Be kind and pitiful to them. Deal with them cheerfully and respectfully."

At any rate Abu Lu'lu' did not receive a convincing reply. Then he determined on avenging himself on the caliph and finally Umar was wounded by his dagger in the mosque and that fatal wound made him die.

When Umar knew that his end was coming soon, he formed a council and appointed six persons; Ali ibn Abu-Talib, Abd-al-Rahmaan ibn Awf, Talhah ibn Abdullah, Al-Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, Sa'd ibn Abu-Waqqas, Uthman ibn Affan as the main members and his own son as a substitute member.

At the caliph's command, these six had to elect one of themselves as the caliph during three days after his death.

In the meantime he stated his opinion about each one of the members. He about Imam Ali (s): "Although Ali is eager for the caliphate but I know that he is the only one, who can manage it in the right way."

In spite of this confession, the members of the committee did not give their votes to Imam Ali and Uthman held the position because all of the members were Uthman's relatives except Al-Zubayr.

Any one could understand it guessing that Imam Ali (s) was with minority and Uthman would eventually the successor of Umar. In briefly speaking that Abd-al-Rahmaan was given the right by the majority to choose the caliph between two persons, Ali (s) and Uthman. He said to Ali (s): "I pay homage to you on the condition that you will follow the book of Allah (the Qur'an), the Sunnah of the Prophet and the policy of the two previous caliphs Abu-Bakr and Umar.

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Imam Ali (s) replied: "I will follow the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (s) but I act according to my own judgments.

The proposal was repeated thrice and the answer was the same. Then Abd-al-Rahmaan turned to Uthman and asked him if he would accept the condition. Uthman agreed to follow the terms the condition and they paid homage to him.

Now it is important to know why the members of the committee ignored the Prophet's statements concerning Ali (s) again.

The prophet said: "Ali is the wisest and superior to all of you. He is the best judge among all."[۲]

When Imam Ali saw his right being suppressed in this way, he said: "This is not the first time you wrong me, but patience is my only way. I swear by Allah that you have not paid homage to him (Uthman) but you expect of him to give you the caliphate later on when he is about to leave."

[۱] Refer to Fadhlullah Roozbahan's Abtal al-Battil, ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's Tahtheeb at-Tahtheeb, ibn Hajar al-Makki's Sawa'iq p.p.۷۸, as-Sayooti's Tareekh al-Khulafa' p.p.۶۶, Nooruddeen as-Sabbagh al-Maliki's al-Fussool al-Muhimma p.p.۱۸, Ahmad ibn Hanbal's Musnad and Fadha'il and it was mentioned by many other Sunni scholars.

[۲] Refer to Ahmad's Musnad, al-Khawarizmi's Manaqib, Meer sayyid Ali Hamadani's Mawaddatul Qurba and Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqi's Sunan.

The politico–economic state of the Muslims at the days of the caliphs

At the time of the Prophet, the Muslims were inspired with feelings of liberty and freedom by canceling partisanship and racial feelings. The Holy Qur'an addressed the Prophet by saying: (Say: I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your god is one God) ۱۸:۱۱۰.

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".Imam Ali (s) said: "Ruling over you means suffering the heaviest burden on my shoulders

The Prophet of Islam had implanted in the minds of the nomads of Arabia the concept of unification and equality that, later on, the caliph Umar traveled to Jerusalem by his only camel and if he rode the camel for a distance, he mounted his slave in the next distance .and he went on foot

Many of those principles, which arose from theism and equity, were observed during the time of Abu-Bakr and Umar. They protected and followed these customs because the Prophet's advices passed mouth to mouth by people and virtue and piety were still the .cause of superiority and greatness

At the same time the Islamic victories began to expand and finally the wide government of Islam was established at the last part of Umar's caliphate and consequently valuable .spoils and many riches were brought to Medina from every side

Umar would not permit the great companions to go away from the center of the government for fear that it would be possible for them to make money and go back to .their bad habits

The first caliph (Abu-Bakr), in his will, commanded Umar: "Watch over the companions not to be concerned with money or position, otherwise disputes and struggles will rise among them and consequently the common people will be divided into many groups fanatically ".and in this case the public power will be weak

Umar always tried to keep the companions separate from the worldly ties. Abu-Bakr said to Abd-al-Rahmaan ibn Awf (a very rich influential man): "Now you have received wealth so much that you have got used to silk clothes and some of you are not content with ".sleeping on woolen stuff

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But as soon as Uthman attained his aim he ignored these regulations. As a result of his weakness and infirmity of will, many personages and great companions became wealthy as he himself had one hundred and fifty thousand dinars and one million dirhams besides the other properties when he was killed. He even broke his promises with regard to the proposed conditions of the consultative committee. His actions were contrary to the policy of the Prophet and the two previous caliphs. Al-Hakam ibn al-Aass, who had been banished from Medina by the Prophet and the two previous caliphs had not allowed him .to come back, was allowed by Uthman to come back

Uthman's daughters got married to Marwan and Harith, the sons of al-Hakam. Uthman paid them a lot of money from the treasury (Bayt al-Mal). Al-Waleed ibn Aqaba, an infamous and slanderous man and had been cursed by the Qur'an, was sent to Kufa as the wali. His misdeed and disgrace reached an extent that he led the Morning Prayer in four rak'as[١] instead of two while

he was drunk. Also other major cities were ruled by his relatives who were of no principles.[١] The people were displeased with Uthman's officers because they were indifferent to the religious matters and they often did what they liked without fearing any punishment from the government. Consequently a new class of people appeared whose aim was to heap up wealth that required oppressing the weak, and violating the people's rights. Deposing and posting walis depended upon the basis of whim and desires. Anyone of good and peaceful people, who complained or criticized, would receive a harsh reaction from the walis. Corruptions were the order of the day. On the other hand, the hostile behavior of Uthman towards some of the great companions like Abu-Tharr, Ammar ibn Yasir and Abdullah ibn Mas'ud had roused a wave of grief and anger among .the Muslims

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Abu-Tharr was the third or the fourth person, who became a Muslim whereupon the idolaters of Koreish tortured him with different kinds of tortures but he remained faithful .to God

The Prophet (s) said: "Among all people Abu-Tharr is like Christ, son of Mary, in self-denial ".and piety

".The Prophet also said: "No one under the sky is more truthful than Abu-Tharr

Abu-Tharr left Medina for Syria where Mu'awiyah was the wali since the age of the second caliph Umar. Mu'awiyah was a clever man. He had become strong during twenty years of rule. During Uthman's reign he was trying to get the caliphate for himself by all means, whereas he would never think that it was possible at the days of Umar's caliphate. He was gifted with wit and he knew well how to quiet those, who were opposing his aim. He used to loosen the strings of the purse for the worldly persons to .make them collaborate with him

Abu-Tharr was the partisan of Imam Ali (s) and he acquainted the people with the greatness of the members of the Prophet's family and guided them to the rightful path. He often criticized Mu'awiyah and Uthman openly. He mentioned their making money and the other wrongful activities. He could not help speaking out and his critical words against the unjust discrimination and the outrages against justice encouraged the poor to ask for .their lost rights

Mu'awiyah knew that if he gave Abu-Tharr the opportunity, the foundation of his state would collapse. He determined to untie this knot by satisfying his need with a bag full of .gold coins

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Abu-Tharr, this generous man, divided the coins among the needy whereas he himself .was in need badly

Finally Mu'awiyah reported Abu-Tharr's doings to Uthman and got permission to send him towards Medina by an unsaddled camel with a hot-tempered slave. When he got to .Medina his thighs were badly wounded and injured

Abu-Tharr would speak harshly to Uthman in Medina too criticizing his conducts. Uthman, who could not endure criticism, exiled this dear and good old man to an arid and lifeless place named al-Rabathah. It was his birthplace. Abu-Tharr, finally, died in an intolerable .remote place after suffering too much

In the meanwhile two other companions of high rank were beaten hard by Uthman's .slaves because of their remonstration against his bad treatment

The people of the big cities of Kufa, Egypt and Basra gathered in Medina to protest against the offending rulers to plead for justice. Their aim was just to improve their situations but regretfully it led to killing and bloodshed. If their complaints had been heard .in time, such unexpected events would not have happened

They had requested Uthman to replace some of his officers. Some of the great companions had given Ammar ibn Yasir a letter so that Ammar would notify the caliph of the truth. When he saw Uthman at his doorway and gave him the letter, he at first received an abrupt answer and then he was mercilessly beaten and injured seriously by .Uthman's slaves that caused hernia to him

[۱] Murooj ath-Thahab, vol.۱ p.p.۴۳۵.

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The caliphate of Uthman

It was concluded according to the Islamic history that Uthman was a man of feeble will and credulous. His counselor Marwan, who was disrespectable and mean among the Muslims, used his undue influence upon the caliph. Time and again he promised the people to improve their affairs and time and again he broke his promise.

Consequently the people gathered before his house and repeated their demands.

When he saw the matter became so serious he asked Imam Ali (s) imploringly to quiet the people and to find a suitable way for rescuing him. At the same time he authorized Imam Ali to bring the mater to an end by negotiating with the people.

The Egyptians insisted on Uthman to appoint Mohammad ibn Abu-Bakr in stead of ibn Abu Sarh, the wali of Egypt. Imam Ali (s) put their lawful demand before Uthman. Uthman accepted but asked for a three-day deadline to manage it. For the other cities, more time was necessary until the caliph's decision would reach there.

Imam Ali (s) came back and talked to the Egyptians. They agreed to get back on the condition that their demands should be carried out and Mohammad ibn Abu-Bakr should become the wali after deposing ibn Abu Sarh.

Uthman, by the mediation of Imam Ali, accepted this without any hesitation. The Egyptians dispersed when Imam Ali (s) accepted the responsibility for doing that. Then some of them went to Egypt with Mohammad ibn Abu-Bakr and some went to stay in a valley near Medina for a while.

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On the next day Marwan said to Uthman: "It is alright now. The Egyptians have left. In order to stop people to come from the other cities, you have to issue a decree saying that there was some misunderstanding but when the Egyptians knew that whatever they had heard was wrong, the whole matter ended and they were satisfied and left here for Egypt. In this way the people of the other cities will not come here and they will be quiet at their places."

Uthman did not want to tell such a lie but Marwan persisted in that until he accepted. Then he went straight to the Prophet's mosque. As soon as he expressed his thought, the people began to shout at Uthman: "Fear Allah! What is this lie? You have to repent."

At last he had to repent. He turned to Kaabah and repented groaningly and went back to his house.

Imam Ali (s), in order to make these uprisings subside, advised Uthman to repent of his past misdeeds before people in the mosque again, otherwise if the next day some other people came, Uthman would again cling to Imam Ali's neck to rescue him from them.

Therefore Uthman made repentance in the mosque and swore to be more adequate in the future. He promised the people that when their representatives met him, he would solve their problems and would satisfy their demands as soon as possible.

When he got back home, Marwan wanted to say something but Uthman's wife interfered and said to Marwan: "For the sake of God; keep quiet! You will cause him to be killed for such sayings."

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Marwan said with fury: “You have no right to interfere in these matters. You are the daughter of that man, who did not know how to perform his ablution till the end of his life.”

She said: “You are wrong...”

The dispute became more serious between them but Uthman stopped them and asked Marwan: “What did you want to say?” He said; “What was that you said in the mosque and what repentance you made? In my opinion, committing a sin is much better than making repentance by force. The result of this notification is the crowding of people before your house. Now go forward and perform their demands.”

Uthman said: “I am not able to deal with the people. Now you go and fulfill their demands. Marwan came out and spoke out: “Why have you gathered here? Do you want to attack or to plunder? You know you can not take the authority from our hands and no one can defeat us. Take your black faces away from here. Allah may damn you.”

When the people saw this double-dealing, they got angry and went to meet Imam Ali (s) and explained to him the whole story. Imam Ali went straight to Uthman's house and said to him angrily: “Good heavens! Why did you misbehave towards the Muslims? You broke your promise for the sake of a faithless man (Marwan) and lost all your wit. At least you should respect your own promise. You know that Marwan will throw you in such a deep hell that you will never be able to come out form it. He has ridden on you and pulled you to wherever he wished. I shall neither interfere in your affairs nor tell the people anything.”

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Na'ila (Uthman's wife) confirmed Imam Ali's words and asked her husband to follow Imam Ali's advices. She said: "Neither you nor your counselor can restore the bad state." Then Uthman sought after Ameer-al-Mu'mineen (Imam Ali) but he refused to meet him. Uthman himself went to Imam Ali's. He expressed his loneliness and helplessness and .asked him for help again

Imam Ali (s) said: "So many times you made promises in the mosque before the people to perform their demands but you broke your promises and when people came to you, they did not receive attention; moreover that your men insulted them. How can I trust in your words in the future? Therefore do not expect anything from me. The ways are clear ".before you. You can choose the one you like to deal with the people

This was the result of Uthman's repentance. Now let's see what happened on the other .side

When the Egyptians caravan reached the coast of the Red Sea, they saw a camel rider crossing with all speed. As he instilled doubts into their minds, they stopped him and asked who he was. He said that he was the slave of Uthman. They enquired where he was going to. He said that he was going to Egypt. They enquired what his aim was of this journey. He said that he was to meet the wali of Egypt. The people said that the wali of Egypt was with them. (According to Uthman's promise it was decided that Mohammad ibn Abu-Bakr would be in stead of ibn Abu Sarh). The slave was enquired if any letter was .with him. He denied

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They decided to search his clothes but they found nothing with him. They wanted to leave ".him alone but some one said: "Search his flask on the back of the camel

They found a lead pipe in the water skin. There was a letter enclosed in the pipe. The caliph Uthman had commanded the wali ibn Abu Sarh as the following: "When Mohammad and his companions get to you, from among them kill so and so and arrest so ".and so and put so and so in jail. You are reinstated in your position

It was a surprise to them. They looked at one another in astonishment. They returned to Medina immediately and put the letter before the Prophet's companions. Whoever heard about this event was filled with wonder because it was a great surprise. This conduct disgusted every one against Uthman. Thereupon some of the companions accompanied .by this people went to meet Uthman to ask him whose seal was stamped on the letter

He answered that it was his own seal. They asked who had written the letter. He said it was his clerk's handwriting. They enquired whose slave was that man. He replied that he was his. They asked whose camel it was with the slave. He answered that the camel belonged to the government. He was enquired who had sent it. He said he did not know. They said: "Everything is yours. How do you not know who has sent the letter? You would ".better leave the caliphate off until another man comes to manage it

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He said: “I will never put off the dress of the caliphate, which Allah has put on me. I will make repentance again.” They said: “Do not talk about repentance. Your repentance had already been considered as nothing since that day when Marwan talked on behalf of you at your door. Now we are not going to be cheated by these bluffs. You have to leave the caliphate and if your men stand in our way we will keep them away and if they prepare for a war we will fight too. If you regard all the Muslims equally and if you are going to administer justice, then hand Marwan over to us to ask him by whose power and support he wanted to bring about the killing of many Muslims by writing this letter.” But Uthman refused to submit Marwan to them. The three-day deadline was finished but every thing .was as it had been before

When the people saw the result of the repentance, they surged and spread over the .streets of Medina and finally surrounded Uthman's house from every side

During these days one of the Prophet’s companions went to Uthman’s house and shouted: “O Uthman, give up this caliphate and for the sake of Allah save the Muslims from any bloodshed.” Suddenly one of Uthman's men aimed at him with an arrow and killed him. This action goaded the people into fury. They shouted: “The killer must be “.handed over to us

Uthman said: “It is not possible to hand over anyone, who supports me.” Then the people, furiously, set fire to Uthman’s house and tried to enter into the house but Uthman's men .confronted the people and kept them away from the door

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At last the people entered into the house of Uthman from adjacent houses drawing their .swords

Those who were guarding the house ran away and those who were defending Uthman .were killed with him

Let it not remain unsaid that Mu'awiyah, the wali of Syria, was previously ordered by Uthman to help him during the days of the siege but he rejected his order pretending that he would not interfere in the affairs of the Prophet's companions. He did not pay attention to Uthman's order because he himself, heart and soul, intended to take the reins of the .caliphate

I had to explain the events of Uthman's end in details because, later on, Talhah, Al-Zubayr, (the two members of the consultative committee, which was formed by Umar to select Uthman for the caliphate) and Mu'awiyah in particular accused Imam Ali of Uthman's bloodshed. Consequently they raised many disturbances and created civil wars .that their bad results have still remained among the Muslims until today

If Uthman had heeded the advices of Imam Ali (s) or at least he had handed Marwan over .to the people, he would never have been killed. But it was the fate otherwise

The caliphate of Imam Ali

Now the Muslims laid their heads together to select a competent person who could run .the caliphate in the right path and could restore their lost rights

They thought of Imam Ali (s), whose conduct was very reasonable during this long period .since the Prophet's death

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In the end they came to a conclusion that nobody else was well qualified for that task except Ali ibn Abu-Talib. They rushed towards his house to pay homage to him as he had said in one of his speeches: “They leapt upon me as camels leaping upon each other going to drink water … in a way that I thought they would kill me or would kill another one “.before me

Imam Ali said to them: “Leave me alone and look for another one. It is important for you to know that the Qur’an and the Prophet's Sunnah will guide my actions and I will never turn back from the right path in order to satisfy the interests of some certain groups or to assure someone’s worldly wishes. Therefore, you can not tolerate my evenhanded policies and judgments. I will be as counselor for you better than to be a chief. Do not “.urge me to be the caliph

The people began to cry and shout loudly. They said: “O Ameer-al-Mu’mineen (the master of believers) do you not see what complicated problems the Muslims are facing? Do you ?“not see that Islam is going to collapse

But Imam Ali refused to accept the offer because he knew that people would like to play with divine caliphate as a means to gain their worldly desires and that it was impossible to .restore the present circumstances as they were at the Prophet's time

When the people insisted on him importunately, Imam Ali (s) delivered a speech to clear away all the excuses they might cling to. He said: “If you want me for your worldly desires, leave me alone and choose another one who may realize your wishes. I will not give up the principles of Islam (equity, reverence for the law, human rights and the like) to secure neither my authority nor the interests of the others. With regard to the subject of the rights and privileges enjoyed by every one, I do not care for the influential people because all the peoples are equal before God. If you have decided to pay homage to me, think it over and over because after the homage if you protest against me or put obstructions in my way, I will force you to come back to the right path. Bear in mind these “.conditions, and then you can reach your heart's desires

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Of course the previous ruling class and the rich, especially Talhah and Al-Zubayr, would not be content with the caliphate of Imam Ali (s) but the glory and the greatness of the revolution made them keep silent. Since they (Talhah and Al-Zubayr) were appointed as members of the council established by Umar to select the caliph after his death, they considered themselves as Imam Ali's equivalents, but they had to pay homage to him .unwillingly

Next day Imam Ali (s) said in his speech regarding the government's plan: "The public are hereby notified that a decree will be issued against those who have made money in unlawful ways and their monies will be requisitioned. The offenders will be soon "... prosecuted

Those, who had misappropriated certain things from the public treasury, were irritated .when they heard Imam Ali's speech and felt sorry for paying the homage

Imam Ali believed that all classes of people, whether Arab or non-Arab, black-skinned or white-skinned, were equal to each other before the law. He would never want a minority to act according to what they liked and to heap what they took from the majority by force. He would never be content with a minority to be offensive against the majority of helpless .and miserable people, who groaned under injustice with no rescue

Imam Ali (s) said: "Achieve equality among yourselves and do not discriminate against one another because hearts are always ready to make mischief and dispute among you." He also said: "I cannot tolerate such injustice that a group of people, under the pretense of noble descent and lineage, takes the products of common people's labor and then scorn ".them

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When the ceremonies of the homage were finished, Talhah and Al-Zubayr, contrary to their expectation, were not invited by Imam Ali (s) to co-operate in the affairs of the state. They determined on going to meet him and request the rule of Kufa and Basra. As Soon as they came into the caliphate house, Imam Ali (s), who was busy with official works, suddenly blew out the candle and lighted another one at once. When they asked about the reason, he replied: "The first candle belongs to Bayt al-Mal (public treasury) and I was busy with the caliphate affairs and since you have come here for a private business, so I lighted my own candle." They looked at each other and left hopelessly.

Many politicians, long ago, criticized Imam Ali (s) by saying that it was not expedient to rouse the great influential companions by his decisions. Furthermore they said that why he did not humored the previous walis that caused them to make troubles for him. Was it not tactful for him to wait until he overcame the state affairs and then to change the situation according to his desired plan?

These objections are not acceptable because the Shia believe that Imam Ali (s) was the representative of God and His Apostle on the earth and he was not of those who told people lies and deceived them to secure their own power.

As a matter of fact, the polity of the divine religions is not comparable to the other systems of rule.

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Islam is based on humanity, equity, justice and other good qualities. Its main purpose is to direct people to monotheism and godliness. The Imamate is an infallible position. Consequently Imam Ali (s) would be responsible to God if he himself or one of his officers offended against the law. His natural morality and his religious duty would require him to ensure the enforcement of the divine law; therefore he always would speak out what .was rightful and he would not care whether people were pleased or displeased

Those who had misused certain things from Bayt al-Mal at the days of Uthman expected that Imam Ali (s) would give them free rein in the state affairs or, at least, he would .counsel with them about the general decisions

Imam Ali (s) was well-known as a practical man and people respected him so highly. However, a few of them hated his righteousness as he himself had said: "How do those, ?"whom my justice is annoying, endure injustice

On the other hand there was a dispute between Imam Ali (s) and A'ishah, the Prophet's wife, because of some misunderstanding. She always had a grudge against him. She previously used to excite the people against Uthman because she was sure that Al-Zubayr, her sister's husband, or Talhah, her cousin, would be the successor of Uthman; therefore she often said the people: "Kill this old hyena! God may kill him. He has become apostate indeed."[١]When she knew that the people had paid homage to Imam Ali (s), she .decided to defy

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In order to carry out her intention, she left Medina for Mecca to stay there in order to incite people against Imam Ali. She would say pityingly: "Uthman was oppressively killed and I would take vengeance on his killer. O people, rise and help me!"

On hearing this, Talhah and Al-Zubayr went to meet Imam Ali (s) to take leave of him to go to Mecca under the pretence of pilgrimage. Imam Ali (s) said: "I am sure that you have plots against me, but I do not bother you as long as you have not disturbed the public peace." They really wanted to take part in the plot, which was developed against Imam Ali (s) by A`ishah.

In spite of the fact that Imam Ali knew their designs, he did not restrain them because in Imam Ali's opinion it was not allowable to arrest one, who had just designed to commit a crime but had not put it in practice yet because one might repent before committing the crime.

Have you ever heard that a commander ignores a probable danger for the sake of the law?

History often mentions that as soon as any ruler gets a hint of a plot against himself, he will immediately get rid of those who have hatched the plot either by killing or imprisoning them. But Imam Ali said to them: "You are free to go wherever you wish but be careful not to disturb the public peace." The Holy Qur'an says: (There is no compulsion in religion; truly the right way has become clearly distinct from error ...) ٢:٢٥۶. Hereon Imam Ali (s) gave the Muslims the maximum freedom to the extent that they would not encroach on the others' freedom.

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All the companions and the ex-walis had paid homage to Imam Ali (s) except Mu'awiyah, the wali of Syria, Abdullah ibn Umar, the son of the second caliph, and Sa'd ibn Abu Waqqass. The last two persons were good for nothing but Mu'awiyah was a sagacious man, who was in no way bound by morality and he did not heed the religious laws. He always had enmity towards Imam and his utmost desire was to attain the position of .caliphate

When he took over Kufa at during the time of Imam Hasan, he said to the people: "I have not come here to correct your religious problems. I have come to rule over you and to manage you." He became very powerful during twenty years of rule and especially at the .reign of Uthman

Imam Ali (s), in conformity to religious standards, decided to depose Mu'awiyah. Some one said to him: "It is not wise to discharge Mu'awiyah so soon. It requires careful ?"handling. Wait a bit until your rule gets strong then you do what you like

Imam Ali replied: "This doesn't conform to my belief because I will be responsible to God if Mu'awiyah offends against law and deprives people of their rights during my ruling. I will ".be answerable on the Day of Resurrection

Now let us see what was going to take place in Mecca. Some of the rich and ex-officers believed A'ishah's pretenses. They came to an agreement to incite the people of Iraq against Imam Ali (s) especially the people of Basra because their tribes were living there .and they might be of some help

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At last an army of three thousands men, whose expenses were paid by the previous .walis, marched towards Basra

When A'ishah was about to leave Mecca, she went to meet Ummu-Salamah (another .wife of the Prophet) asking her to accompany her in this journey

Ummu-Salamah was a good and kind woman. She tried to remind A'ishah of some of the Prophet's sayings about Imam Ali (s). She said to her: "One day, if you remember, the Prophet and I came into your room and at the same time Ali (s) came in and whispered with the Prophet for a long time. You wanted to interrupt him and said to Ali: "It is my turn today to be with the Prophet after nine days. Now you came here to turn his attention from me to some other things." I saw that the Prophet's face reddened with anger and he said: "Be quiet A'ishah! By God, whoever displeases Ali and bears him a grudge, is not one ".of the believers." Then you came back feeling sorry

'.A'ishah said: "Yes, I remember

Ummu-Salamah added: "Do you remember that one day you were washing the blessed head of the Prophet (s) and I was cooking Hiss (a kind of Arabian soup), suddenly the Prophet raised his head and said: "I wish I knew at which of you the dogs of Haw'ab[۲] would bark. She certainly will be damned on the Day of Resurrection." Then I said: "I seek refuge in God and His Apostle if I would be that one." Then the Prophet pointed to you and ".said: "Beware if you would be that one

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".A'ishah said: "Yes, I remember

Ummu-Salamah said: "I remind you again that one day I and you were with the Prophet (s) in a trip when Abu-Bakr and Umar joined us to rest under a tree while Ali (s) was busy mending the Prophet's shoes. They said to the Prophet(s): "May we ask you about who will be your successor and to whom we will resort after you?" The Prophet replied: "I know who he is and I show the evidence of his dignity and prudence, but if I inform you of his name, you will keep off him as the Israelites when they kept off Aaron." Then I asked the Prophet: "Who would be our Imam after you?" He said: "It is that man who is mending my ".shoes." Then I and you ourselves saw that Ali was patching the shoes

".A'ishah said; "Yes, I remember

Ummu-Salamah said: "If it was so then why are you instigating people to revolt against Ali (s) under the pretext of avenging Uthman's blood?" She said: "I want to reform the [Muslims' affairs."[۳

As the Prophet had said, A'ishah on her way to Basra got at a place where some dogs barked at her. It reminded her of the Prophet's admonition. She asked her camel driver about the name of that place. When she knew that it was Haw'ab and that she was the .one, whom the Prophet had talked about, she refused to proceed further

Talhah and Al-Zubayr gave a perjured witness that the place is not Haw'ab and they .brought fifty persons to witness falsely that it was not Haw'ab

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Finally she determined to proceed forward to Basra. It was a surprise to the people when .they saw her riding a camel to the battlefield

The Holy Qur'an, addressing the Prophet's wives, says: (And stay in your houses and do not display your finery like the displaying of the ignorance of yore) ٣٣:٣٣. She, in this .manner, had missed her stateliness and honor

When they arrived at the gate of Basra, Uthman ibn Hunayf, the wali, came out with his men and stopped in their way being ready for the war. They took the field and before long some were killed from both sides. A'ishah intervened and stopped the fighting. They came to an agreement that the actual situation would remain as it was until Imam Ali (s) .arrived at Basra

But after less than forty-eight hours they made a nightly attack on the wali of Basra and killed forty innocent men of his. Uthman was badly beaten and his beard was plucked. Then they looted the public treasury and the grain stores and they also killed twenty .guards

A noble man of Basra named Hakim ibn Jabalah met the chiefs of the invaders trying to convince them to stop the attack but the war raged between them and at last Hakim and .Seventy persons of his companions were killed

When Imam Ali (s) knew about the march to Basra he, accompanied by five hundred of .the Prophet's companions, left Medina for Basra

When he got at Thi-Qar, a place between Kufa and Basra, he sent his dear son Imam Hasan and Ammar ibn Yasir to Kufa to call the people for the war. Although Abu Musa, the wali, Opposed and created many difficulties for dispatching the forces, seven thousand fighters joined Imam Ali's army. Some other soldiers under various standards united with .Imam Ali before he reached the field near Basra

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There were many great companions, many youths of the Hashemites and Imam Ali's .sons; Imam Hasan, Imam Hussein and Mohammad ibn al-Hanafiyah among the army

Imam Ali (s) dismounted from his horse and offered a four rak'as prayer and then he prostrated himself on the ground. He was heard praying for his enemy and saying: "O "!God, the Sustainer of the earth, grant us their good and protect us from their evil

At first he ordered that no one of his men should attack the enemy before they made an attack on them. Then he, unarmed, came forward and called Talhah and Al-Zubayr to witness when saying: "Both of you and A'ishah know that I am free from the guilt of Uthman's blood and I would never say what you used to say about him. Did I force you to ?"pay homage or you did willingly

.Al-Zubayr was affected by these words but Talhah got angry and began to growl

A young man got permission to go before the enemy with a copy of the Qur'an but he was .killed by an arrow. Thus they declared war

Ammar ibn Yasir, the great Prophet's companion, went to warn them of the consequences of the war but they were impervious to his arguments and he also was .answered by arrows

Imam Ali (s) did not allow his men to attack the enemy yet. He believed in negotiation between the both parties before beginning the war. He thought it was the only way to solve the quarrels; therefore his men were not allowed to start the war before the .enemy

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The opposite army went on sending arrows like the rain. Some brave combatants of Imam Ali's men were killed.

Imam Ali came in front of the enemy without wearing armor and called out: “Where is Al-Zubayr?” When Al-Zubayr saw Ameer-al-Mu’mineen unarmed, he came out and stood before him. Imam Ali said: “O Al-Zubayr, do you remember one day when the Prophet said to you that you would fight against me and that your side would be wrong?“

Al-Zubayr replied: “Yes, he had said so.“

Then Imam Ali (s) asked him: “Why have you come then into the battlefield?” He replied: “I have forgotten what the Prophet had said. I would not have come here if I had recalled it.” Imam Ali (s) said: “It is well that now you recall it.” He said: “Yes.” After saying this, he went straight to A’ishah and after a short conversation he turned the reins of his horse and left the field.

When Imam Ali (s) returned to his army, he noticed that the enemy has attacked the right and left flanks of his army. He said: “Now the excuse is null.” He called for his son Mohammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah and said to him: “Attack the enemy now.” But the shower of the enemy's arrows made him stop. Imam Ali (s) Shouted: “Risk yourself and go ahead through the arrows and spears.” But he hesitated to attack because of a storm of arrows coming from the enemy. Imam Ali (s) said to him: “Why do not you go ahead.” He said: “Father, I do not find a way to proceed through these showering arrows.“

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When Imam Ali (s) saw this irresolution of his son Muhammad, he took the sword and the banner from him and made such an attack upon the enemy that disturbance and fright covered their ranks. Whichever side he attacked, it became clear. Heads and bodies were falling under the hooves of the horses. Then he returned and said to his son: "You must fight like this." Mohammad took his sword and attacked the enemy with a group of Ansar. ".They left heaps of dead bodies on the field

On the other side of battlefield the men were sacrificing their lives around the camel (of .A'ishah) devotedly in spite of the falling heads and bodies one over the other

Imam Ali (s) ordered his men by saying: "Cut off the camel's leg. It is a devil." Then he .made a severe attack again and finally cries of "peace" were heard here and there

As soon as the camel fell down, the enemy ran away towards the desert and leaving A'ishah alone in the heat of the fight. But thousands of fighters were killed for the sake of .holding the rein of the camel

A'ishah was escorted by her brother Mohammad ibn Abu-Bakr to the house of Safiyya .bint [۴] Harith in Basra and then she was sent to Medina respectfully

This war began at an afternoon and finished in the same evening. One thousand and seventy men were killed from Imam Ali's army of twenty-two thousand persons, whereas .seventeen thousand persons were killed from the enemy out of thirty thousands

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When Imam Ali captivated A’ishah, instead of reproaching her, he was kind enough to her. He also overcame his most revengeful and obstinate enemies like Marwan, Abdullah ibn Al-Zubayr and others in this battle but they were forgiven permitted to go wherever they like. In the same way the idolaters of Koreish tribe were formerly forgiven when the .Prophet (s) had conquered Mecca

During his praying for the killed men, Imam Ali was heard praying for the enemy: “O God, if they fought against me unknowingly or with intention of setting up the rightness and “.(justice, they were innocent (I hope them to be remitted

Throughout the history's memory, no commander would ever act so generously when he won a victory. Imam Ali’s generosity and clemency were much more than to be counted. He wrote in his famous epistle to Malik al-Ashtar, the wali of Egypt: “People are usually subjected to weakness and they may do wrong things on purpose or by mistake. You should forgive them if you would like to be forgiven by God. Do not regret your forgiving “.someone and do not be pleased when punishing someone

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Refer to Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by ibn Abi'l-Hadeed, vol.۲ p.p.۷۷, Akhbar az-Zaman by [۱] .al-Mas'oodi, Khawass al-Umma by Sibt ibn aj-Jawzi and many other Sunni historians

.A place near Basra [۲]

.Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by ibn Abul Hadeed [۳]

.Bint" means the daughter of and "ibn" means the son of ["۴]

Deposal of Mu’awiyah

Neglecting the other troubles, the ruling of Mu’awiyah in Syria was the most complicated .matter that Imam Ali (s) confronted at the beginning of his caliphate

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When Syria was conquered by the Muslims, Yazid, the elder brother of Mu’awiyah, was appointed as the wali by Abu-Bakr and then Mu’awiyah took it over at the reign of Umar. Therefore the Umayyads (Mu’awiyah's family) had ruled over Syria for twenty-four years before the caliphate of Imam Ali (s). This long time was quite enough for a clever and sagacious man like Mu’awiyah to prepare the first steps for ruling as a caliph over the Muslims and he succeeded to do it at last.

Mu’awiyah, by nature, had a great skill to put down his opponents’ claims and he knew their hopes and wishes well.

On the other hand, Syria was the richest country among the other Islamic territories and Mu’awiyah, who was careless about how to spend the public monies, could weather every difficulty easily. Those, who wanted to impose themselves upon people, gathered in Syria and did their best to firm the foundation of his rule.

Some critics criticized Imam Ali (s) and thought that he was unable to handle the state affairs and did not know how to manage the task. But they did not know that there was a great difference between the religious government and the other kinds of governments. The difference was that according to the religious laws, dishonesty, deception and even white lies were not acceptable. In this respect Imam Ali (s) could not agree with Mu’awiyah, who was indifferent to the religious matters. Furthermore he had refused to pay homage to Imam Ali (s) in spite of the fact that all the Muslims and the great companions of the Prophet had submitted to him willingly.

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At any rate a few letters were exchanged between Imam Ali and Mu'awiyah but regretfully Mu'awiyah was impervious to Imam Ali's advices. Finally the battle of Siffeen .took place

The battle of Siffeen

Mu'awiyah made preparations for the war and set off towards Imam Ali's area with forty thousand soldiers. They got at a place called Siffeen between Syria and Iraq. Mu'awiyah arrived there earlier than Imam Ali (s) and occupied the bank of the river. He closed the .way to the watering place that no one else could get water except his followers

Imam Ali's army reached the place and they were badly thirsty. They found that there was no any drinking place for them to get water. The enemy controlled the water .carefully that getting water was not possible easily

Imam Ali (s) sent word to Mu'awiyah but he refused to open the way to the watering place. Imam Ali (s) was obliged to say to his men: "Get up and get water by sword." Those thirsty soldiers attacked the guards, dispersed them away and occupied the watering .place

Now the Iraqis wanted to pay the Syrians in their own coin but Imam Ali (s) did not want to requite evil with evil and said: "Do not prevent any one from getting water." Hence every .one could take water freely

Then Imam Ali (s) sent some persons to warn Mu'awiyah of the consequences of the war and to reason with him the homage. Some other groups also acted as intermediary to prevent bloodshed but Mu'awiyah used every excuse to declare the war. He pretended that he would not let Uthman's blood be lost. He had hung the bloodstained shirt of Uthman on the pulpit of the great mosque of Damascus, around which thousands of Syrians used to weep for Uthman's innocence and then they had sworn to avenge his .blood

p: ٩١

Since Mu’awiyah had accused Imam Ali of Uthman’s murder, the Syrians were in favor of Mu’awiyah to fight against the Iraqis.

Mu’awiyah was really an autocrat in Syria since the reign of the second caliph Umar and he would never submit to Imam Ali (s) to lose the position. Hereon he involved the Muslims in a war that its bad effect has still remained till the present time.

At last the battle raged and Imam Ali's army of ninety thousand soldiers confronted the Syrian army of one hundred thousand soldiers. During the first week some fighters of both parties came forward day after day and fought each other. Some of both sides were killed. In this manner the battle became more widespread and bloodshed increased.

In the eighth day ibn Abbas (the Prophet's cousin) and Malik al-Ashtar, the two courageous men, attacked the enemy's right and left flanks that Mu’awiyah’s forces had to retreat from the field several times. In the ninth day Imam Ali (s) himself came forward with his men and made such an attack that the whole battlefield rocked and the enemy’s rows broke off under storms of arrows and spears. Imam Ali came and stood where Mu’awiyah could be seen. Imam Ali challenged him saying: “Come towards me. Let the winner of the fight be the ruler.”

Although Amr ibn al-Aass, Mu’awiyah’s counselor, encouraged Mu’awiyah but he began to go back.

The historians mentioned that Imam Ali (s) had showed such bravery in Siffeen, that you seldom see its like in the history. Everywhere he appeared, the enemy's lines were confused and they scattered before his sword like ants and locusts. No one dared to face him unless he was killed in the first rush. Therefore he occasionally changed his dress and horse.

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Suddenly, in the thick of the fight, a man leaped forward and assaulted Imam Ali (s), who evaded the danger. Then Imam Ali hit the man upon his back with his sword. The man was split into two halves. The people thought that Imam Ali’s hit had missed the man but when his horse jumped two separated halves fell down on the ground. The enemy knew later that he was Imam Ali (s) in disguise.

Some days passed in this manner and the Iraqi army had the advantage over the enemy many times because of the continuous and break-neck attacks. At the night of al-Hareer[١] when the successive rushes of Imam Ali's men reached the highest point and continued till the morning, the killed were more than thirty thousand ones.

In the tenth day Malik al-Ashtar and Ibn Abbas again assaulted the enemy severely and their men showed a high spirit of sacrifice. The spirit of the Syrians was broken and signs of defeat appeared among them.

While the battle was still raging the, enemy found that winning a victory by sword was impossible. Amr ibn al-Aass, who was prone to mischief and was famed for shrewdness, planned to play a trick. He suggested to Mu’awiyah by saying: “Let us raise some copies of the Qur’an on the spears and then the armies of the two sides are to be called to make the Qur’an as arbitrator. This act will create separation among them. Consequently many soldiers will stop fighting and many others will like to keep on it. The result will be to our privilege because, in this way, we can put off the war for a while to get rid of this distress.

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Some pages of the Holy Qur’an were raised on the spears and consequently the form of .the war was changed

When Imam Ali (s) saw that the Holy Qur’an had become the device of their trickery, he said: “Be careful and do not be deceived. They invented this trickery just to get rid of defeat. They are neither interested in the Holy Qur’an nor connected with the religion. We are fighting against them to follow the Holy Qur’an's principles. Keep on the war to obtain “.the victory over the dying enemy

But unfortunately a large number of his army began to shout and cry. They said to Imam Ali: “We prefer the verdict of the Qur’an and if you do not respond to the call of Qur’an, we “.will deal with you as we did with Uthman. You have to stop the war at once

Imam Ali (s) did his best to make them understand the trick but they were impervious to his arguments. They had forgotten the Prophet's saying: “Ali is always with the Qur’an and the Qur’an is with Ali. They will never separate until they come to me at Kawthar River (a [river in paradise).”[٢

The battle still raged but they made Imam Ali (s) send a word to Malik al-Ashtar[٣] asking him to come back from the field. When Malik received the order, he was surprised. He said: “This is not the time to leave the battle. Tell Imam Ali (s) to wait a little until I come back with the tidings of victory.” The message was delivered to Imam Ali (s) but many soldiers shouted and urged upon him that Malik must come back as soon as possible. The :messenger came back to Malik and said

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".They are all in chaos. If Imam Ali's life is dear to you, go back to him at once"

Malik was obliged to go back to Imam Ali (s). After scolding the rebellious soldiers he said: "According to the homage you paid to him, obeying him would be obligatory for you." But regretfully they paid no attention to his saying. Then it was agreed that each party should nominate an arbitrator to decide the matter of the caliphate according to the Holy Qur'an. Amr ibn al-Aass was nominated by Mu'awiyah's followers and Abu Musa al-Ash'ari was chosen by Imam Ali's followers as arbitrators. Imam Ali (s) had in mind to appoint ibn Abbas or Malik al-Ashtar as his agent but army did not listen to him and they stuck to Abu .Musa

Some spies of Mu'awiyah were in rapport with a few heads of Imam Ali's army. They used .to aggravate the condition

The historians mentioned that Abu Musa was a stupid man and that he had not shown confidence and trust in Imam Ali (s). He even prevented the people from joining Imam .Ali's army

When the rebels insisted on that Abu Musa should be the arbitrator, Imam Ali (s) said: "Now you do not listen to me. Well, choose your own way! It is not far when you will bite ".your fingers regretting your misdeed

Finally Abu Musa and Amr were chosen as arbiters. They put their heads together and decided to depose Mu'awiyah and Ali (s) from the seat of the caliphate and then to let the people choose an adequate person for that rule. They were to announce their decision to .the people

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After some formalities, Amr said to Abu Musa: “It is impolite that I precede you. You are older than me. You announce first.” Abu Musa became proud after this flattery and came before the crowed and saying: “We both determined on deposing Mu’awiyah and Ali ibn Abu-Talib and hereupon the Muslims have the right to choose a caliph as they like.” Then it was Amr's turn. He said: “O people, you heard just now that Abu Musa deposed Ali (s) from his position and I approve it. But there is no reason that makes me depose “.Mu’awiyah so I appoint him as the caliph

As soon as Amr ended his words, the Muslims made a protest against the verdict of the .arbitrators but no attention was paid to their protest

Abu Musa cried hoarsely and said to Amr: “You deceived me. You are like a dog. If you attack it, it will bark and if you leave it alone, it will bark.” Amr said to him: “You are like the “.ass, which bears books

.However Amr's trick firmed the authority of Mu’awiyah to some extent more than before

The simple-minded people, who forced Imam Ali to accept the arbitration, thought highly of the two arbitrators and thought that their verdict would be according to the Holy Qur’an but they had not paid attention to the Holy Qur’an, whereas some verses of the Holy Qur’an had praised Imam Ali and had urged the Muslims to follow him. The Holy Qur’an says: (O you, who believe! be careful of (your duty to) Allah and be with the true .ones) ۹:۱۱۹

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Many of the great Sunni commentators mentioned that “the true ones” were Mohammad [(s) and Ali (s) and “be with them” meant that the Muslims should follow them.[۴

The arbitrators had forgotten the Prophet's words: “Ali (s) is the wisest, the best judge and the most superior to all of you. Opposing his sayings and judgments is opposing me [and opposing me is opposing Allah and that is blasphemy.”[۵

Could this short sketch of arbitration be a guide to the Muslims or the Qur’an and the Prophet's Sunnah in order not to be trapped by the enemy’s tricks and not to go after the ?worldly transient desires

It is much regrettable that some authorities make use of deceitful devices to exploit the .poor nations unfairly under the name of humanism

Imam Ali (s) believed that both science and religion should be adopted to serve the human beings. He said: “Allah has not made it obligatory for the ignorant to learn until He has made it obligatory for the learned to teach.” He also said: “Whoever trades and does “.not know the rules of religion, will fall in usury

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Hareer is an Arabic word. It means "to howl" and "to whine". The fallen and wounded [۱] .soldiers were howling in that livelong night

Refer to ibn Mardwayh's Manaqib, al-Haythami's Majma'a, vol.۱ p.p.۲۳۶, al-Hakim's [۲] .Mustadrak, vol.۳ p.p.۱۳۴ and al-Fakhr ar-Razi's Tafseer, vol.۱ p.p.۱۱۱

Malik was a very close companion of Imam Ali because of his sincerity and [۳] steadfastness in faith. Imam Ali showed great confidence and trust in him. He was Imam Ali's right hand in all the difficulties. In addition to his bravery, he had a great ability to organize and to administer the state affairs. Suffice it to say that Imam Ali had said about ."Malik: "He was to me as I was to the prophet

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Ath-Tha'labi in his book Kashful Bayan, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti in his ad-Durr al- [۴] Mathoor, Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani in his Hilyatul Awliya', Sheikh Sulayman al-Hanafi in .hisyanabee'ul Mawada and Muhamad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji in his Kifayatut Taib

Refer to Amad's Musnad, al-Khawarizmi's Manaqib, Mir Said ibn Ali Hamadani's [۵] .Mawaddat al-Qurba and Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqi's Sunan

The battle of Nahrawan

After appointing the arbitrators, the people, who insisted on Imam Ali (s) to accept arbitration, began to say that it was heresy to appoint some one as arbitrator except Allah. The Holy Qur'an says: (The judgment is only Allah's; He relates the truth and He is the best of deciders)[۲] and since Imam Ali (s) had accepted the arbitration then he turned .heretic

Of course they have distorted the meaning of the verse and hereby they caused the simple-minded people to separate from Imam Ali's army. When Imam Ali knew the conspiracies, he sent some of the great companions towards them and then he himself went to their camp and finally they dispersed after hearing convincing evidences. When they arrived at Kufa they began to tell a lie again that Imam Ali (s) had broken the .agreement of arbitration and that he was going to fight against the Syrians once again

Imam Ali (s) refuted their allegation and hereupon these people rebelled against him. They encamped in a place named Nahrawan near Baghdad. These people were called .(Khawarij) the Kharijites

When Imam Ali (s) heard the verdict of the two arbitrators, he wrote to the Kharijites that the verdict was according to the arbitrators' own wishes and not according to the Holy Qur'an. He said that he had not accepted it; therefore he had decided to fight the Syrians .and that the Kharijites should support him this jihad

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They replied: "Since you had accepted the arbitration, you turned heretic. If you confess your fault and repent, we will think over the matter and then we will inform you of what .we will do." This letter indicated their insisting on rebellion

Imam Ali (s) had formerly prepared and equipped an army to march towards Syria, but his men expressed their desire to deal with the Kharijites first because they had killed the wali of Nahrawan and his maid, who was pregnant, and they also had butchered three .other innocent women. Another man, who was sent for investigation, was killed too

Consequently Imam Ali (s) turned towards Nahrawan and sent the Kharijites a word that the murderers of the wali and the killed women should be handed over to him to be ".punished. They replied: "We altogether killed them

Imam Ali (s), as usual, did not want to begin the war; therefore he sent a man with a word of peace to them. As a result of this meeting, many groups separated from the Kharijites and joined Imam Ali's army. Those, who remained, were four thousand persons. They did .not care for killing or being killed

Imam Ali prevented his men from beginning any attack but they put their arrows in the bows and drew out their swords from the sheaths. In this critical situation Imam Ali (s) warned the Kharijites that the war would be hard for them, but they were so enthusiastic that they rushed suddenly against Imam Ali's men and caused a bloody fight. As Imam Ali (s) had foreseen formerly, they all were killed except nine persons, who fled away to save .their lives. Only eight persons of Imam Ali's army were martyred

p: ٩٩

Surprising it was! Who had suffered from oppression more than Imam Ali (s)? Those who encouraged people to kill Uthman, after killing him, they accused Imam Ali of being the guilty and tried heir best to avenge.

Those, who insisted on him to stretch his hand to pay homage, broke their homage and waged the battles of al-Jamal (the camel) and Nahrawan. They even threatened him with death if he would not accept the arbitration and when he accepted it, he was charged with heresy and then they wanted him to repent. Above all, he was the first man in Islam, whose certain right was usurped by political collusions.

At the same time Mu'awiyah decided to extend his domain; therefore he sent his armies to different cities of Imam Ali's domination. He, hereby, created disorder and confusion so that Imam Ali (s) could find no peace of mind. He sent many groups of marauders and killers to put down the opposition and to obtain homage by force.

The Prophet (s) had said to Imam Ali before: "After me you will fight against the perfidious (those who fought in the battle of al-Jamal), the oppressors (Mu'awiyah's followers) and the apostates (the Kharijites)."

Mohammad, the great educator, trained the people of that time so that they could make the civilized world of those submit to them days within half a century because they could control their personal desires easily by virtue and abstinence.

As a result of the social and moral education, those people never thought of achieving their own aims. They just thought of the benefit of the ummah. Really, the successive victories of the Muslims at the first age of the Islamic state were due to their principles and morals.

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At the days of Abu-Bakr and Umar these principles were still protected but at the reign of Uthman, the people did not pay much attention to those principles. On the other hand, the Muslims obtained victory over many countries and consequently they gained a lot of goods and spoils which led them to laze in luxury.

They practiced the luxurious and splendid life of the Romans and the Persians and made the new generation understand that no one could live at ease without riches. Hereupon the policy of the Islamic caliphate was changed into monarchy and tyranny.

This atmosphere was quite favorable for a man like Mu'awiyah, who was ambitious and wanted to found a hereditary sultanate instead of the Islamic caliphate. But Imam Ali (s) wanted to restore the Prophet's Sunnah and the simplicity of the life during the time of the two caliphs; Abu-Bakr and Umar and this made him face troubles that at last he was martyred.

The people gathered in Syria to firm Mu'awiyah's rule.

The historians mentioned that Imam Hasan, the elder son of Imam Ali (s), who defended the religion, declared the war against Mu'awiyah. In the thick of the battle, some commandants of Imam Hasan's army received a bribe from Mu'awiyah. They left Imam Hasan and joined Mu'awiyah.

Imam Hasan, facing many difficulties, was obliged to come to terms with Mu'awiyah. Contrary to the agreement, Mu'awiyah decided to appoint his son Yazid as his successor. Yazid was dissolute and ignominious. He was a mass of sins and faults. Mu'awiyah poisoned Imam Hasan to clear clearing the way for his son. Finally he managed to appoint Yazid by force or by bribing the oppositionists when necessary.

p: ١٠١

The brave rising of Imam Hussein, the other son of Imam Ali(s), which had a regretful consequence, was also the result of immorality spread among the people and the loss of the favorable atmosphere of the divine caliphate. It showed that people would prefer [material concerns to principles.[٢

Since Imam Hussein (s) was the greatest fighter against tyranny, I deem it my duty to remind the readers briefly how he sacrificed himself for defeating injustice and .oppression

After the death of Mu'awiyah, all the Muslims, willy-nilly, paid homage to Yazid except .four persons. Imam Hussein was one of them

The people of Kufa invited Imam Hussein to reform the bad political and social situations and to guide them to the right path. They sent him more than twenty-five thousand letters inviting him to set out towards Kufa. In the meanwhile he was offended by the wali of Medina to force him to pay homage to Yazid but he left Medina for Mecca at night with his household. The Umayyads pursued their adversary even in Mecca. They intended to remove this obstacle by killing Imam Hussein. Imam Hussein, because of the reverence of Kaabah and that he did not want any bloodshed to be committed inside it, left Mecca towards Kufa. He confronted a host of one thousand soldiers on the way to Kufa. The commander of them asked Imam Hussein to pay homage to Yazid; otherwise he would not be allowed to enter the city. He refused the proposal and then he had to pitch tents in .a torrid place named Karbala

p: ١٠٢

The wali of Kufa dispatched an army of thirty thousand persons to Karbala within four days to surround Imam Hussein and his household. They occupied the watering places in order to force Imam Hussein to surrender when suffering thirst. They were so hard-hearted that they did not pay any attention for the children's crying because of thirst.

There were one thousand persons with Imam Hussein when he got at Karbala. He told them that they had the option to leave or to stay, because he would be killed in that journey. They left him in groups and only seventy-two persons, including his sons, brothers and nephews accompanied by their wives and children, remained to support him. Every one of those devoted men made a short speech showing his sincerity.

At any rate they all were terribly thirsty. The worse of it was that the enemy did not have any pity even for the suckling babies and the old persons. It was three days that water was not found in the tents and the all were terribly thirsty especially the children. Next day early in the morning, the enemy put arrows in the bows and shot at Imam Hussein's tents. They hereby declared the war.

Some of Imam Hussein's companions were martyred in this attack. The companions then began, one by one, to attack the enemy and each one killed a good few of the enemy.

Then it was Imam Hussein's turn to sacrifice himself. It was the sacrifice that made the world think with great respect and admiration of this nonesuch hero.

p: ١٠٣

Try to think about a man, who was thirsty, tired and faced many terrible difficulties since early in the morning till the noon. He mounted and dismounted his horse many times to bring the dead bodies of the martyrs to the tents and exactly at this critical moment the enemy proposed again that he had no option but to be killed or pay homage to Yazid.

Imam Hussein said: "That bastard (ibn Ziyad, the wali of Kufa) made me choose one of two things, the death or the shame of submission. I will never prefer living with ignobility to being killed for the sake of God. Martyrdom is an honor in our family." Then he came towards the women's tents to say goodbye for the last time. They surrounded him and mourned over his forlornness and loneliness. He heartened them with soft words and said to them that they should be patient with calamities. Then he set to the battlefield.

According to the traditions of fighting in those days, it was man to man challenge. When Imam Hussein killed many of their brave heroes, no one else dared to fight him alone.

The enemy altogether made assaults. Imam Hussein beat them constantly. When they saw that they were not a match for him, they began to shoot at him with showers of arrows and spears.

Thurayh ibn Shurayk struck his right shoulder with a sword. A poisoned arrow hit his heart and then he fell down on the ground.

p: ١٠۴

The enemy began to rush towards the women's tents. Imam Hussein shouted at them loudly: "If you have no faith, be at least freemen in this world according to your tribal .traditions." They returned and martyred him

There is an article, written by an English learned woman under the title of "Three Martyrs". She says briefly: "In the history there were three praiseworthy men, who sacrificed themselves for exalting the word of "rightness" and for spreading justice and liberty among the people. They excelled all the other devotees in the world. The first one was Socrates, the philosopher of ancient Greece. The second one was Jesus Christ and the third was Imam Hussein, the son of Imam Ali (s) and the Prophet's grandson from his daughter." She added: "If you study their lives deeply, you will know that Imam Hussein's devotion is more important than the first two persons. He was forced to emigrate and was involved in many difficulties. His companions were killed, while being thirsty, before his eyes. He himself was put to death tragically, while he knew that his wives and children ".would be taken as captives to Kufa

That was a summary of the sad story of the greatest fighter, who fought against tyranny and autocracy and who denied himself before all the pleasures and he did not want to .submit to abjectness and debasement

.Let us return to the main subject

After the process of the arbitration, Mu'awiyah began to attack various places of Imam Ali's domination. He spread killing and marauding all around and caused fear for the .people of the far quarters of Kufa

p: ١٠۵

Imam Ali (s) summoned the people to chase the enemy but the people did not respond to him. It seemed that the people were unwilling to fight. He encouraged them again to take part in the war at least for protecting their country.

At last a force of four thousands, headed by Hijr ibn Adiy, rose to chase the enemy. There was a short encounter between the two parties but the enemy ran away.

A few days before his martyrdom, Imam Ali summoned the commanders and after scolding them for their idleness and listlessness, he said: "I have decided to fight against Mu'awiyah. If no one comes to help me, I will go to Siffeen with my own relatives only."

They knew that he would practice what he said. Hereon they collected the people and said: "It will be disgraceful for us, if he is killed alone."

In order to avoid this public disgrace, forty thousand persons flew to their arms and got ready for the battle. They promised to fight against Mu'awiyah to the bitter end, but unfortunately the criminal hand of ibn Muljim ended the life of the great leader of the believers.

It was to be regretted too much that his life failed him to reach his goal. When his beard was colored with his head's blood, he said: "I swear by the god of Kaabah that I won."

Yes, he was troubled with a train of events that he could do nothing but to grieve.

p: ۱۰۶

Although many people were fascinated by his high characteristics, some others, who had heaped monies during the reign of Uthman, could not endure his justice. They often .caused seditions and plotted to overthrow his government

On the other hand, Imam Ali couldn't be indifferent to the misdeeds of his officers or to the expenditure of the public money for private motives and political purposes. And, above all, he had to resist his relatives' unlawful desires lest they would weaken the .pillars of the religion

Some critics criticized Imam Ali and said that it would be much better if he did not accept the caliphate after Uthman in order not to be involved in so many difficulties or at least he should have resigned his post and had left the people alone especially when the spies misguided the people to wrong him in Siffeen. They ignored that the Muslims themselves rushed towards him and begged him insistently to stretch his hand in order to pay .homage to him as the caliph

The people knew well that he was that fair man, who would never ignore the interests of the Muslims for the sake of his own interests. Furthermore, according to the divine law when there were enough numbers ready to support the right, then the religious leaders .had to rise to get back the lost rights of the oppressed ones from oppressors

He said: "By Allah, who split grains to grow and created all the creatures, unless the people had not paid homage to me and unless Allah had not put the ulema under obligation that they had not to be silent in front of the oppressors and had not to be away from supporting the oppressed, I would have slackened the reins of the caliphate and I ..."would have done what I had done the first day after the Prophet's death

p: ۱۰۷

In another part of the same sermon he said: “The crowd of people leapt upon me as thirsty Camels when leaping upon each other at the watering place. They wanted to pay homage to me importunately. They crowded around me from every side in a way that “.Hasan and Hussein were about to be crushed under feet

On the other hand, if Mu’awiyah ruled over an army like the Iraqis, he would have become involved in many troubles, as he himself said to his friends: “I am ruling upon such stupid people, who obey me blindly, but Imam Ali's followers strive hard for the sake of the religious matters and they think over the problems diligently and sometimes they dispute with Imam Ali (s). Consequently there is no secrecy about the state affairs. Imam Ali discloses all the affairs before people but I conceal my affairs. This is the secret of my “.success

“.Imam Ali (s) said: “Mu’awiyah is not more intelligent than me. He flatters and cheats

:Notes

.Qur'an ۶:۵۷ [١]

Nowadays the same condition is prevailing allover the world. The racial discrimination [٢] has caused many vagrancies and miseries among the peoples o the world. All these aroused from the unprincipled conducts that became far from morals. Hence many small .countries fall victims to the political whims of the great countries

(THE HUMANE QUALITIES OF IMAM ALI (S

(Abstinence and Piety of Imam Ali (s

Umar ibn Abd-al-Aziz, the Umayyad caliph, had said: “No one at all throughout the world will be like Imam Ali in piety and devotedness.” All of the Islamic researchers confirmed .Imam Ali’s asceticism in food and dress

p: ١٠٨

One of his companions said: "Once I went to visit Imam Ali (s) in his house when he was the caliph. He was eating a piece of dried bread with a little milk. I said: O Ameer-al-Mu'mineen, how do you live with this scanty food? He replied: The Prophet ate staler bread than this and his dress was coarser than mine."

It is beyond bravery when one can afford to better his livelihood but he denies himself and becomes content with a simple subsistence.

Those, who disagreed with Imam Ali and were intolerant of his justice, were searching for ease and luxury. They oppressed people to deprive them of their rights for the sake of their own pleasures in this worldly life.

Imam Ali was far above al these bad conducts. Once he wrote to the wali of Basra: "Remember that every follower usually follows his leader and imitates him. You know that your imam is contented with two pieces of bread as his victual and two rags as his cloths. Certainly you can not do so but at least try to help me with piety and uprightness. By Allah, I have neither treasured gold nor collected money out of this world..."

He often said: "How can I be satisfied to be called Ameer-al-Mu'mineen (the commander of the believers) by people and do not share in their hardships or I do not become an example for them in the difficulties. Shall I be comfortable with a full stomach and there are hungry stomachs around me? I must live in the lowest level so that the poor may be able to endure poverty easily."

p: ١٠٩

Imam Ali (s) went to visit his companion Ala' ibn Ziyad. When he saw his large house, he said to him: "You are in need of such house in the afterworld more than in this world. But if you want so, you are to receive guests in it, to take care of your relatives and to pay poor-rate and alms."

Then Ala' said to him: "O Ameer-al-Mu'mineen, I complain about my brother Aassim, who has left his family to worship God." Imam Ali (s) sent for him. When he came, Imam Ali said to him: "O enemy of yourself, surely Satan has misled you. Do not you feel pity for your wife and children? Do you think that if you practice what Allah has made lawful for you, He will dislike you? You will be unthankful to Allah in doing so."

He said: "O Ameer-al-Mu'mineen, you yourself put on coarse dress and eat single food."

Imam Ali (s) replied: "Woe unto you! You are not like me. Certainly God has made it obligatory for the just leaders to live like the poor people so that the poor grouch their poverty and indigence." Therefore he himself repaired his shoes with his hand and he himself patched his clothes.

Imam Ali used to sell the yields of his garden of date-palms to spend its money for charity.The poor of Medina often surrounded him in the mosque. He divided the whole money among them to go home empty-handed while his family was in need badly.

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The excellences of Imam Ali (s) and his upright policy realized through his words and .deeds was the very civilized Islam we tried to research on

The Vastness of Imam Ali's Knowledge

The Shia think that the knowledge of the prophets is covert and that God has revealed it .to him by inspiration and then they vest it in their successors at the last gasp

Imam Ali (s) said: "The Prophet, in his deathbed, whispered to me and taught me one ".thousand chapters of knowledge; each one of them contained one thousand chapters

Of course Imam Ali's scientific theories about monotheism, the creation of man, heavens, earth, stars, suns, mountains, clouds thunder, plants, philosophy of history, phylogeny and even the creation of the peacock and the bat. The interpretation of the Qur'an .confirmed what he had said about the mentioned above items

His speeches, his letters to his officers and his scientific sayings (except jurisprudential traditions) had been compiled in a book named Nahj al-Balaghah, which was really next .to the Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an is the words of God. The great part of it deals with many branches of knowledge like theology, sociology, economy and others. This holy book needed to be interpreted by a pious and learned man. Nahj al-Balaghah was the great work of Imam Ali (s) in this concern. It was below the speech of God and higher than man's speech. Imam Ali was the father of gnosis and many Islamic mystics have based their principles .on his teachings

p: ۱۱۱

His religious decrees and judgments were followed and obeyed by the previous caliphs as the second caliph Umar often said: "I would have gone astray if Ali (s) had been not [here."[۱

Once he was asked what number was to be divided by ۱,۲,۳,۴,۵,۶,۷,۸,۹ and ۱۰ without fraction. He answered quickly: "Multiply the number of the days of a year by the number ".of the days of a week to get the result

.X ۷ = ۲۵۲۰ ۳۶۰

Once again three persons came to him and said: "There are ۱۷ camels that must be divided among us in this manner; half of them for one of us, a third of them for the other ?"and a ninth of them for the last one. How can we divide live camels among us

Imam Ali (s) added to them one of his own camels and then he said: "Now the half of the camels is ۹ heads, the third is ۶ and the ninth is ۲ heads." ۹+۶+۲=۱۷. He answered their .problem and then he took back his own camel

In fact this was really a scientific masterpiece but the most important thing was his deep knowledge of monotheism, which had given him much importance. Certainly monotheistic knowledge is connected with morality and it is affected by the call of conscience. It consequently brings peace and comfort. It is neither destructive nor ruinous because it is not based on material concerns. Of course Islam provides such liberal education. At first, a person is purified from evilness and then is taught science and wisdom to do good for .mankind

p: ۱۱۲

Recently some news came from America saying that some ۱۴ or ۱۵ years old students attacked their fellow students by gun and consequently a number of them were killed. Thereupon the public prosecutor asked the local clergyman to think of a remedy and to .restrain the present situation because men of authority could not do anything

Although it is a bit late to stem the tide of prostitution, drunkenness and licentiousness .among the people, it is much better doing nothing at all

In order to put down such wicked acts among the youngsters, firstly, the educationists should gradually insert the religious teachings in school's programs and, secondly, papers and film editors should reconsider making erotic films and writing deviational stories, because T. V and magazines are the real educators of people. They play an important role .in teaching them

Just as Europe had obtained many benefits from the civilization of Islam during the Crusades, the west, at the present time, needs to be in contact with the spiritual centers .in the Islamic Republic of Iran to seek remedy for its shortcomings

Now it is the outset of exchanging views among the civilizations and it can audaciously be said that the words and deeds of Imam Ali (s) are good guides to find the way of .establishing peace and securing the human rights allover the world

Here I quote some of Imam Ali's scientific and sententious words to shed more light upon :his personality. Imam Ali said

Every one, who is in charge of the Muslim's affairs, neglects his charge, God will neglect-۱ .him

p: ۱۱۳

.The worst men of all are the treacherous businessmen-٢

Destitution is the greater death. Having few children is relief. Practicing moderate-٣ .economy is half of the living. One, who controls his economy, will not face poverty

.Avoid gluttony for it causes diseases and illnesses-۴

Weakness and listlessness are the calamity of the nations. Being patient with sufferings-۵ .and struggling against hardships are courage

.Purify yourselves of dirty passions to reach high ranks before God-۶

Keep equality among the all and do not add fuel to the fire of discord because the-٧ .hearts are always ready to differ from each other

Receive people willingly, deal with them cheerfully and trustfully and be humble before-٨ .them

The ignorant is known by six characteristics: being angry without having virtue, talking-٩ idle talk, generosity out of its suitable place, unable to distinguish the friend from the .enemy, disclosing the secrets and trusting in every body

.Pay the worker his due wages before his sweat is dried -١٠

.The greatest sin is aggression and violation -١١

.The highest virtue of man is to avoid persecuting people and to be kind to them -١٢

.The one who believes in resurrection won't be greedy for the worldly wealth -١٣

.Everything can be changed except habits -١۴

.The one, who becomes idle, will miss his personal and social rights -١۵

.Religion does not agree with caprice. Caprice is foe prevailing over reason -١۶

He was asked: "What is good?" He said: "Good is not muchness of money and children -١٧ ".but muchness of knowledge

.Injustice of judges is the most disgraced act -۱۸

.The highest compassion is to share the brothers in sorrow and in joy -۱۹

Where are the tyrants and the sons of the tyrants? (He meant that they had perished -۲۰ .(without taking anything from this world with them

.Wealth is the fountain of the sins -۲۱

.Whoever warns you of fault is like one who gives you good tidings -۲۲

The one, who becomes a leader of the people, has to educate himself before - ۲۳ educating the others. His educating must be by his doings before his sayings. The one, who educates and instructs himself, is more estimable than those, who teach and instruct .the others

.No wealth is more profitable than wisdom -۲۴

.No loneliness is sadder than haughtiness -۲۵

.No intellect is better than tact -۲۶

.No greatness is like abstinence. No courage is like avoiding sins -۲۷

.No compassion is like good humor -۲۸

.No inheritance is like politeness -۲۹

.No guide is like God's favor to grant prosperity -۳۰

.No trade is like beneficence -۳۱

.No profit is like divine reward -۳۲

.No virtuousness is like reluctance to do doubtful things -۳۳

.No knowledge is like meditation -۳۴

.No worship is like performing religious decrees -۳۵

.No belief is like modesty and fortitude -۳۶

.No greatness is like humility -۳۷

.No honor is like knowledge and no aid is like consulting with wise friends -۳۸

p: ۱۱۵

.The value of every man is due to his goodness -٣٩

.Take knowledge from every where as possible as you can -۴٠

.Every material thing passes away and every expected thing is to come at last -۴١

.Woman is as a scorpion but her sting is honey -۴٢

.Wealth is the basis of every sin -۴٣

.Being loose-tongued is like being a beast -۴۴

.Death is near and the company of the friends is short -۴۵

.Avoiding sins is easier than repenting afterward -۴۶

He, who looks for riches, denies every thing else and he, who acts according to his -۴٧ mind only, will be ruined. He, who consults the others, participates with them in their .minds

For me the thinking of an experienced (old) man is more admirable than of a - ۴٨ .dexterous young man

I knew Allah by the changing of decisions, the breaking of wills and the resolving of -۴٩ problems by themselves. (There is a metaphysical power above us that controls our .(affairs

Be careful not to waste the blessings of Allah because everything you waste, does not -۵٠ .come back again

It is a surprise to me how a miser hurries to poverty, from which he runs away and he -۵١ misses the wealth, which he looks for. He lives like the poor in this world and he will be punished like the rich in the afterworld. I wonder about the selfish and haughty man, who was a sperm yesterday and will be a rotten carcass tomorrow (why he is so proud). I wonder at one, who doubt about the existence of God while he sees His creation. It is also surprising when one sees that people die before him but he forgets that he himself will die. I wonder at one, who denies the afterworld whereas he has seen the first world and I wonder at one, who is busy heaping wealth in this transient world but is ignorant of the

.everlasting world

p: ١١۶

۵۲- Protect yourself against cold when it comes (at its beginning) and receive it without worry when it is about to go because its effect on bodies is like its effect on trees. In the beginning it ruins and in the end it refreshes.

۵۳- I explain Islam in a way that no one else has explained it before. Islam is submission; submission is steadfastness in religion; steadfastness in religion is spreading one's belief; spreading one's belief is acknowledging doing the obligations of God and doing the obligations means action.

۵۴- Missing an opportunity causes grief.

۵۵- He, who follows a moderate course in life, will never become poor.

۵۶- When Allah wants to degrade someone, He deprives him of knowledge.

۵۷- People are enemies of that which they do not know.

۵۸- He, who receives several opinions (in consulting the others), understands the incorrect situations.

۵۹- Displease the evil doer by doing good to the good doer.

۶۰- Obstinacy destroys counsel.

۶۱- The result of carelessness is regret and the result of prudence is safety.

۶۲- If there are two different invitations; one of them is to mislead.

۶۳- I did not doubt about rightness since I had been shown it.

۶۴- Whoever turned away from rightness got ruined.

۶۵- If patience does not relieve a man, impatience will kill him.

۶۶- O son of Adam, whatever you earn more than your necessary need, you will only guard it for the heirs.

p: ۱۱۷

Every container narrows with what is put in it except the container of knowledge; it -۶۷ .expands continuously

.The tree, whose trunk is soft, has thick branches -۶۸

.Envying a friend is because of untrue love -۶۹

.It is no justice to judge through probabilities -۷۰

.The worst provision for the Day of Judgment is oppressing people -۷۱

The best act of a generous person is to overlook what he knows (to cover the defect -۷۲ .(of people

Long Silence leads to dignity. Justice increases connections and communications. - ۷۳ Generosity raises esteem. Humility brings blessings. Tolerating hardships leads to supremacy. Good behavior defeats the enemy. Forbearance towards a fool increases .supporters against him

Kumayl ibn Ziyad was one of the closest companions of Imam Ali(s). He said: "One day -۷۴ Imam Ali took me out of the city. After taking a deep breath, he said: "O Kumayl, hearts are the containers of knowledge. The best of them is that which preserves its contents ;well. Take care of what I say to you. People are of three types

One is the divine scholar, who has set himself free from carnalities. The other is that, who seeks knowledge and he is also on the way of salvation. The third is the common people, who run after every caller and follow every sound. They do not seek the light of .knowledge and do not provide any reliable support

O Kumayl, know that knowledge is surely preferred to wealth. You are guarded by knowledge but you have to guard wealth. Wealth will decrease by expending but knowledge will increase by spending. One, who grows up in a rich family, can not endure .hardships when the wealth disappears

p: ۱۱۸

O Kumayl, acquiring knowledge is one of the bases of religion and religion turns round the circuit of knowledge. A learned man steps in the way of religion with knowledge, with which he wins fame during his lifetime and after his death. Knowledge commands but .wealth is commanded

O Kumayl, men of property will die even though they live for a long time but learned men remain as long as there is a life on the earth. Their bodies turn to dust but their images .are placed in the hearts for ever

Then he pointed to his chest and said: "This is full of knowledge and I wish I could find some one to bear its burden. Even if I can find someone, I cannot confide in him because he may misuse it in the way of his worldly desires and he may use God's favor against His servants or he hereby dominates over people, or he may seek rightness and truthfulness but there may be no any insight in his heart. Consequently doubts will be instilled into his mind and he will follow the doubts. He will be affected by passions and will be greedy for .wealth. Thus knowledge dies away by the death of its bearers

Yes, but the earth will never be void of those, who guard God's evidences and laws; either they are well-known and famous or they are unknown and hideaways in order that the .Sharia of Allah not to be cancelled or vanished

How many persons are they or where are they? Although they are few in number but they are highly esteemed by Allah. Allah guards His evidences and reasons by them and they entrust these evidences to others like themselves to sow the seeds of knowledge in their hearts. Knowledge has taken them to the real understanding and hereupon they will .be the guide of the compact faith in God

p: ۱۱۹

They deem easy what the unbelievers think as difficult and they become familiar with what the ignorant consider as strange. They live with their bodies in this world but their souls live high with the Beneficent Creator. They represent Allah on the earth and they invite people to His religion.

How I am fond of seeing them. Now go wherever you want, Kumayl.

۷۵- He, who glorifies a rich man for his wealth, loses one third of his religion. (One, who worships God sincerely, ought not to bend before other than Him for the sake of wealth or any other thing because all people are free and equal). If a man reads the Holy Qur'an and is to be put into Hell after death, he is of those, who treat the verses of Qur'an with mockery. If a man's heart gets attached to this world, he will be afflicted with three things; continuous worry that will never let him be comfortable, an unending greed and an unachievable desire.

۷۶- Contentment is as good as wealth and good humor is as good as blessing of God.

۷۷- Imam Ali was asked about the meaning of Allah's saying after praising a virtuous man or woman: (And we will most certainly make him live a happy life). He answered: "It means those who are content."

۷۸- Participate with one, who has abundant livelihood because he is luckier for getting more riches and he is expected to increase your share therein.

۷۹- About the meaning of the Qur'anic verse: (Surly Allah enjoins the doing of justice and benevolence) he said: "Do not oppress the others (be kind to the people)."

p: ۱۲۰

He said to his son Imam Hasan (s): "Do not be the first to declare a war, but if you are -٨٠ called for it, give a contentful answer; because the caller for a war is a rebellious and the ".rebellious is to be ruined

Imam Ali (s) was asked to define the wise man and he said: "A wise man is he, who -٨١ puts things in their proper positions." Then he was asked to describe the ignorant. He said: "I have already done so." (The ignorant is one, who does not put things in their proper .(positions

Imam Ali (s) said: "By Allah, your world (in which you quarrel with one another like -٨٢ vultures and dogs), in my point of view, is meaner than a piece of a hog's bone in a leper's ".hand

".(Woman is evil; from which man cannot escape (he is in need of her" -٨٣

One, who acts carelessly, loses his rights and one, who believes the storytellers," -٨۴ ".misses his friends

An extorted piece of stone in a house (to be within its structure) is a cause of its" -٨۵ ".ruination

The day of the oppressed over the oppressor will be severer than the day of the" -٨۶ oppressor over the oppressed." (Bearing oppression in this world is easier than bearing it (.in the next world

".When responses are numerous the truth remains unknown" -٨٧

".When the possibilities increase, desires decrease" -٨٨

".Try to make one's good idea about you remain as it is" -٨٩

p: ١٢١

The most preferable doings are those that you are obliged to do them (God's" -٩٠ ".(obligations

I knew Allah through the breaking of determinations, change of intentions and when" -٩١ ".problems are resolved by themselves

The affliction of this world leads to the cheer of the afterworld and the cheer of this" -٩٢ ".world leads to the affliction of the afterworld

Anger is a kind of madness because when a mad one returns to his senses, he does" -٩٣ ".repent. If he does not repent, his madness is certified

Good health comes from lack of envy (an envious person melts away in the heat of" -٩٤ ".(envy

If the wise man's word is reasonable, it will be as cure but if it is not, it will be as" -٩٥ ".illness

".A little job continued carefully is better than a big job done carelessly" -٩٦

".Between you and the advice there is a curtain of pride and haughtiness" -٩٧

.When the learned becomes lazy, the ignorant exceeds the limits" -٩٨

".Knowledge closes the way of those, who claim baseless excuses" -٩٩

Imam Ali (s) was asked about destiny and he replied: "It is a dark path; do not tread -١٠٠ upon it. It is a deep ocean; do not dive in it and it is the secret of Allah; do not trouble ".yourselves for knowing it

I had a close friend, whom I respected him very much because he did not pay any" -١٠١ attention to this worldly life. He was not gluttonous and he did not wish what he couldn't find. He did not ask for more than what he would get. He kept quiet most of his time. If he spoke, he would quiet the other speakers. He often quenched the questioners. He was modest but he was like the lion in the war. He would not adduce any argument unless the judge was present. He would not blame any one for an excusable matter until he heard his excuse. He would not complain of any trouble except after abatement of nuisance. He

would say what he would do and he would not say what he would not do. Even if he was dominant in speaking, he could not be defeated in silence. He would like to keep quiet more than to speak. If he would face two things, he would reject the one that was nearer to fancy. You have to acquire these good qualities but if you cannot acquire them, you know that acquiring a part is better than to leave the whole.”

p: ١٢٢

Imam Ali (s) was asked about the distance between the east and the west. He said: -۱۰۲
".“One day's traveling of the sun

Do not keep company with a fool because he approves his doings before you and” -۱۰۳
".likes you to be like him

Your friends are of three kinds and your enemies are of three kinds too. Your friends ” -۱۰۴
are; your friend, your friend's friend and your enemy’s enemy. And your enemies are;
".your enemy, your friend's enemy and your enemy’s friend

Imam Ali (s) saw a man busy striving against his enemy but he would harm himself. -۱۰۵
He said to him:“You are like that who thrusts a spear through his chest to kill the person
".(sitting behind him (on the horse

".How many examples there are but how few are those, who learn from them” -۱۰۶

He, who insists on quarrelling, falls in sin. If he falls in sin, he will be under the effect” -۱۰۷
.of that sin. It is difficult for a quarreler to abstain from sin

Your messenger is the translator of your mind and your letter is the most eloquent” -۱۰۸
".thing that expresses your thoughts

The indigent is the messenger of God to you. Whoever denies him, denies God and” -۱۰۹
".whoever grants him, grants God

".A self-respecting man will never commit adultery” -۱۱۰

A man can fall asleep when he loses his child, but he cannot when he loses his” -۱۱۱
".property

".The kings are the watchmen of Allah on the earth” -۱۱۲

p: ۱۲۳

The least right of Allah on you is that you are not to make use of His blessings in" -١١٣
".committing sins

".Not being in need of asking pardon is better than putting forth true excuse" -١١۴

".The greatest wealth is not look forward to what the others have in their possession" -١١۵

A time will come when nothing will remain of the Qur'an except its writing and" -١١۶ nothing of Islam except its name. The mosques will be flourishing with building but empty of guidance. Their builders and inhabitants will be the worst of the all on the earth. Seditions will appear from them and all sins will turn towards them. If any one keeps himself aloof from sins, they would bring him back to them and if any one falls behind, they push him towards them. Allah, the Glorified, says: (I swear by myself that I shall send upon them an evil wherein the wise will be puzzled over it (how he can save himself from ".the perdition) and He will do so. We ask Him to forgive our mistakes during negligence

O people, fear Allah (avoid sins) because man has not been created in vain to busy" -١١٧
".himself with amusement nor he has been set free to do nonsense

Words are under your control as long as you do not utter them yet, but when you" -١١٨ utter them you will be under their control. Therefore take care of your tongue as you take care of your gold and money, because sometimes a saying may take a blessing away and ".put you to trouble

p: ١٢۴

“.Do not say what you do not know and do not say all what you know” -۱۱۹

He, who engages himself in various affairs, will be obliged to seek remedies how to” -۱۲۰ “.get out of them

Take from this worldly life whatever comes to you and keep away from whatever” -۱۲۱ “.refrained from you. If you do not do so, be moderate in your quest

“.A statement may be more effective than an attack” -۱۲۲

."He, who opposes rightness, will be knocked down by it” -۱۲۳

Imam Ali (s) wrote to his officer, Ziyad ibn Abeeh: “Be just with the people and avoid -۱۲۴ violence and injustice because violence leads them to wander and injustice leads them to “.insurge

Of course, those who accustom themselves to a simple life, leave without getting anything and oppose their fancies, God pours the light of knowledge into their hearts, especially if the simplicity was linked with avoiding sins. To prove this statement, I point out the manner of the ascetics’ lives, who deny themselves for a time and consequently .they can foretell the happenings of nature which are going to occur

Imam Ali was a paragon of simplicity and virtue and the things mentioned above were quite applicable to him. (Those who accustom themselves to simplicity, God pours knowledge into them.) There are enough sayings to be said but let me point out some of .the Prophet's sayings about the scientific position of Imam Ali (s) to end this matter

p: ۱۲۵

The Prophet said: "I am the city of knowledge and Ali (s) is its gate. Anyone, who likes to enter the city, has to come in through its gate."[١] He also said: "Ali is the wisest of all of [you."[٢

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Refer to the judge Fadhlullah ibn Roozbahan in his book Ibtl al-Battil, ibn Hajar al- [١] Asqalani in his at-Tahtheeb p.p.٣٣٧, ibn Hajar in his al-Issaba, vol.٢ p.p.٥٠٩, Hajji Ahmad Afandi in his Hidayatul Mutab p.p.١۴۶, ١٥٢, Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his Musnad and Abu '.Na'eem al-Isfahani in his Hilyatul Awliya

It was mentioned by al-Hakim an-Nayshaboori, at-Tha'labi, Muhammad aj-Jazayiri, [٢] .Muhammad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji, al-Khwarizmi and many other Sunni scholars

Refer to Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by ibn Abul Hadeed, vol.٣ p.p.۴٠, Mawaddatul Qurba [٣] .by Meer sayyid Ali al-Hamadani and many others

(The Justice of Imam Ali (s

Imam Ali's life and justice are closely bound up with the history of Islam. This appeared especially during his caliphate. Whenever his name is mentioned the word of justice .comes to mind

At the beginning of his life he fought against injustice and oppression of Koreish to spread justice of Islam. In the last days of his life he confronted terrible difficulties in order to .realize justice among people and at last he was martyred for it

He regarded people with reverence, whether they were Muslims or non-Muslims. He did his best to distribute wealth and spoils among them justly. Some great Arab men stated their grievance openly because that their share from Bayt al-Mal was equal to that of the .poor

p: ١٢۶

At the beginning of his rule Imam Ali said: "I will summon those who have deprived people of their rights to the court and I will apply the law to them even though it doesn't please ".them

Those, who enjoyed from the public treasury during the reign of Uthman, expected that Imam Ali (s) would never refuse to employ them in the state affairs, but he in the first day of his caliphate said: "I will get back all the wealth gifted to this and that even if they have ".paid them to their wives as dowry

He was too strict about the public money to the extent that he displeased his older brother Aqil, who was blind and troubled with having a large family, when he had .requested more than his share from the treasury

Once when his daughter had borrowed a necklace from Bayt al-Mal for a short time, Imam Ali (s) got angry when he knew about it and he threatened the treasurer to be punished for his carelessness. He said to his daughter: "I would have punished you if you ".had not guaranteed it against risk

He was very adequate in distributing the wealth and the grains among the people so that .the all, far or near, could enjoy their shares equally

Nowadays the world's population is divided into two classes; a group living in extreme poverty that a bit of food is not possible for them and another group surrounded with .affluence and riches living at ease and luxury

p: ۱۲۷

The Islamic civilization does not allow such distinction of classes; therefore Imam Ali (s) in his famous epistle to the governor of Egypt wrote: "There are many indigents among people, who do not request for more than their share when they are badly in need of more. For God's sake, safeguard their rights because the responsibility lays on you before God. Assign a portion from the treasury for their living and education wherever they are, whether near at hand or far from you. The rights of the all ought to be protected by you."

He often said: "Wherever there are palaces and affluences there are surely many lost rights beside them."

This is really the civilized Islam, which calls for argument among the civilizations.

It is clear that social justice is based on righteous judgments of the judges. Therefore Imam Ali (s) had instructed the judges with many legal instructions in order to spread justice everywhere.

According to Imam Ali's instructions, every judge ought to treat the litigants equally in looking at them, talking with them and in seating them so that the judge's relative would not exploit the opportunity to gain illegal benefits and that the judge's enemies would not despair of justice.

Once he said to the second caliph Umar: "There are three things that if you put in practice, you won't be in need of other thing;

۱- Enforcement of the religious law upon the stranger and acquaintance equally.

۲- Judging according to the book of Allah (Qur'an) in state of anger or consent.

p: ۱۲۸

Just division of the spoils between the lowly people and the nobles and between the -۳ ".black and the white

Nowadays, in some civilized countries of the world a black-skinned boy or girl is not admitted in whites' schools. Regretfully in the hospitals of the U. S. A., even in the northern part where people used to fight against slavery, the wards and surgeries of the whites differ from those of the blacks. Young and inexperienced doctors have no right to visit the .white persons, whereas the various tests are performed in the blacks' section

Now we go back to dry and sandy Arabia of fourteen centuries ago where ignorance and party spirits were spread. The noble privilege and grandness were too much hateful and the ordinary people could never look forward to the positions that were held by the nobles. Imam Ali (s) proclaimed freedom and equality and those, who were entitled to virtue, became high-ranking officials during his government. He urged people to behave .fairly towards each other without letting differences trouble their life

Although such privileges were cancelled by the charter of the Human Rights organization under the name of freedom and equality, it took a long time until the west got rid of the .gloom of the ignorance of the Middle Ages

In spite of this declaration of the Human Rights, we regretfully see the racial feelings and .supremacy over other nations and bloody wars throughout the world

The shameful act of killing the Palestinians in Sabra and Shatilla camp and the felony of the Sorbs in Kosovo and Herzegovina are not just stories. These ugly and hateful events .are written down in the pages of history like a stain on man's forehead

p: ۱۲۹

Imam Ali (s) used to keep the Muslims away from clinging to party-spirit and vanity. He says in his sermon al-Qasi'ah: "Praise be to Allah, Who puts on the dress of exaltedness and dignity and has allocated them to Himself. He has made them for Himself and has forbidden His creatures from them."

Then after reciting a few Qur'anic verses he said: (When your Lord said to the angels: surely I am going to create a mortal from dust: So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit, then fall down making obeisance to him. And the angels did obeisance, all of them. But not Iblis: he was proud and he was of the unbelievers. He said: O Iblis, what prevented you from doing obeisance to him whom I created with My two hands? Are you proud or are you of the exalted ones? He said: I am better than he; Thou hast created me of fire, and him Thou didst create of dust. He said: Then get out of it, for surely you are driven away. And surely My curse is on you to the Day of Judgment) ٣٨:٧١-٧٨.

Then Imam Ali (s) kept on his speech and saying: "The vanity of Iblis (Satan) and his feeling proud of his being created of fire made him be cursed by Allah. And so he arrives at a good conclusion that this enemy of God (Satan) is the leader of those who boast and feel proud towards others by virtue of their origin and descent and they, consequently, are subject to disfavor and curse of Allah."

p: ١٣٠

There were many Jews and Christians living under Imam Ali's domination. They were free .to practice their rituals and their rights were secured by the government

One day when Imam Ali was exhorting people to jihad, he said: "It is reported that the enemy has taken ornaments off the legs and the ears of two Christian women, who were under the Islamic rule. And then he said: "One, who hears this startling news and dies, is ".not to be blamed

But regretfully today, in the twentieth century, the Muslims are treated inhumanely in many countries and more terribly in places where the people were ruled previously by colonial policy like India, Somalia, Guinea and others under the pretense of reforming the civil organizations and sometime, under the pretense of administering justice or settling .discipline and peace

Whenever the unlawful interests of the colonial powers were encroached upon, they did not keep to their promises about the social justice and tolerance and they would tread .upon the Muslims' rights

For example, Ethiopia was formerly ruled by the church of Egypt, which was under the British authority. Its inhabitants were ۳۵٪ Muslims and ۶۵٪ Christians and others. There was not any government school for the Muslim youths. Whenever the Muslims instituted a school on their own expense, it was closed because of the heavy taxes enacted by the high authorities. This hostile behavior continued so severely that no one else could build a .school

If a Muslim was indebted to a Christian and was not able to pay his debt, he would become automatically a slave for the creditor without hearing his petition. Such debtor became the object of buying and selling before the eyes of people and no one said: "Oh, ".he is a human being too

p: ۱۳۱

No Muslim was employed by the government departments in spite of that the Muslims formed one third of the population of this country.

On the other hand, if the wali wanted to make an effort in the interest of the Muslims, he would not have the authority to do it because the church had the control over all the state affairs and Ethiopia had to obey the commands issued by the church.

Have the Christians ever faced such annoyance from the Muslims along the history? Are they ready to be treated like their own treatment? Certainly not!

Therefore, it indicates a ruinous party-spirit that the Christians (colonial countries) accept it satisfactorily.

Imam Ali (s) said: "It is sufficient for you to educate yourself that you avoid what you dislike from the others".

History mentioned that the independence of the local Churches was respected by the Muslims when they occupied Spain. The Muslims associated with the Christians in a friendly manner, but after a time when the Spaniards got their country back, they established many courts to inquire about the people's beliefs. The main duty of those courts was to inquire about the Muslims in order to accuse them of a bad precedent to be used later as a cause of condemnation. They used the most shameful acts of torture to suppress the Muslims in a way that history had not mentioned its like at all.

In a word, many hardships were imposed upon the Muslims to force them to turn Christians.

p: ۱۳۲

The Holy Qur'an says: (Allah does not forbid you respecting those who have not made war against you on account of (your) religion, and have not driven you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly, surely Allah loves the .doers of justice) ۶۰:۸

And: (This day (all) the good things are allowed to you, and the food of those who have been given the Book (the Jews and the Christians) is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them; and the chaste from among the believing women and the chaste from among those who have been given the Book before you (are lawful for you) when you have given .them dowries ...) ۵:۵

It is clear by these Qur'anic verses that Islam has given a chance to the followers of the other religions to associate with the Muslims freely and that the Muslims should deal with .them peacefully

Imam Ali (s) said: "When you overcome your foe, forgive him as a way of thanking God ".that He enables you to overcome him

Considering this truth, Imam Ali (s) recommended people, especially his officers, to be just to every one, whether acquainted or not, and to fulfill their promise when they are in .treaty with foreigners

Many of his men insisted on him to break his promise concerning the agreement of the arbitration. Although he was obliged to accept it, he did not pay attention to them and ".said: "It is not of justice to break my promise

p: ۱۳۳

A Christian woman was attacked by the enemy in a frontier locality and they had snatched her ornaments from her ears and hands. When Imam Ali knew about it, he exclaimed from on the pulpit and said angrily: "If one hears this and dies with grief, he won't be blamed."

Islam is the only religion that calls for human beings to associate with each other peacefully and with mutual respect.

The Value of Man in Imam Ali's Thought

Imam Ali (s) wanted to revive all the human values that were granted to people by the Prophet of Islam and they were declined during the reign of the third caliph Uthman.

Once, Imam Ali set out to Syria. The people of Anbar (a place between Syria and Iraq) met him. They had come out from the city to welcome him. When they saw Imam Ali, they began to prostrate themselves on the ground and then they ran in front of him. When he asked why they did so, they replied that they respected their chiefs in this manner.

Imam Ali said: "By Allah, this action does not benefit your chiefs but it makes them be proud and haughty. We all are the servants of God. I do not have any preference to you, except that my responsibility is more than you since I have accepted the tenure of the caliphate. By doing this you trouble yourselves in this world and you will get misery in the afterworld."

Once, Imam Ali (s) was going back to Kufa. He met one of his followers, who was of nobility in his town. He began to walk with him while Imam Ali was on the horseback. Imam Ali (s) said to him: "Get back! Going on foot by a man like you with one like me is misfortune for the ruler and insult for the believer."

Imam Ali (s) said: "The worth of a man is as much as his courage. His valor is due to his "... self-respect

As it was said earlier that courage consisted of virtue, self-reliance, patience before .terrible difficulties and such qualities of magnanimity

In Imam Ali's thought, the value of a man was according to his humanity and kindness to people. He pointed it out in his letters to his officers. The most famous of them was his epistle to the wali of Egypt. He said in his letter: "`Fill up your heart with affection and kindness towards people. Do not treat them fiercely like the greedy beasts, which feel satisfied by devouring each other. Be careful not to appropriate what belongs to the others. Remember that people are of two kinds; they are either your brothers in religion or your brothers in mankind. They are usually subject to mistakes but you have to forgive their inadvertent slips, if you would like to be forgiven by God. You are their chief as I am your chief and God watches both of us. He wants you to manage their affairs..." He wrote to the tax collectors: "Deal with people justly and do your best regarding their needs, because you are treasurers of the people, delegates of the community and the envoys of the Imam. Do not prevent anyone from getting his needs. Try your best to secure the people's requirements. Do not force them to sell their winter or summer clothes or their cattle in order to pay the taxes. Be careful not to whip anyone for tax collecting. Do not touch any property of anyone, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, who are under the ".protection of Islam

p: ١٣۵

At any rate, he honored people without making a difference between familiars and .strangers

Imam Ali (s) was grieved with al his heart for the poor, because he thought that poverty and destitution would never give people a chance to better themselves. He said: "God has not chastened his servants with harder than poverty." He, in order to compensate this deficiency, tried to do two things; first to improve the production in large quantities and then to distribute it justly among the people all in all. On the other hand, he thought that a starving man was usually angry that his income would not be enough to earn his .livelihood and he had to struggle to feed his family

Surely, such a man, who struggled against poverty, would not be able to withstand .difficulties and would not show any reaction when his rights were trodden upon

Therefore Imam Ali sent a decree to everywhere saying: "Try the best to develop and improve the farms. Prepare the agricultural implements for the farmers and be careful not to ruin the countryside or the countrymen because development and consistency of a ".state is due to the unneedy farmers. This duty is to precede all the others

Although ownership was allowed for every one in Islam, but there was such a limit that it would never lead to capitalism. It prevented the appearance and growth of capital and capitalism by prohibiting usury, monopoly, extortion, overcharging prices and using gold and silver dishes. On the other hand it stopped the rising of poverty by taking zakat and .alms from the rich and giving them to the poor and spending them for the commonweal

p: ۱۳۶

Freedom in Imam Ali’s Thought

All the politicians and the cruel powerful men usually created an atmosphere of distress among people to frighten them in order to submit. For this purpose, they built many houses of detention and prisons to put the opponents in them and if someone made a protest against such an action, he would be put to torture on a charge of rebellion. Hence .no one dared to defend someone's right

But the Prophet of Islam charged the Muslims with a duty to advise the walis and to show them the right way to realize justice if they behaved unjustly. He said: “The best kind of ”.jihad is saying a word of rightness before an unjust ruler

How great it was that the Prophet of Islam had granted such free will to the people .fourteen centuries ago, so that they could debate with the rulers

Abu-Bakr, the first caliph, said: “If I disobey Allah and His apostle, I have no right to ”.govern on you and you do not have to obey me

One day Umar the second caliph, said: “You, people, should guide me to the right way if ”.you saw me going in a wrong way

An ordinary man stood up and said: “If you follow the curved way, we will bring you back ”.to the straight way by this curved sword

Once more Umar said: “I am the Prophet's caliph and a man of authority. You have to ”.obey me to spread the goals of Islam

p: ١٣٧

One of present people said: “If you told us wherefrom you have got your shirt, of course we would obey you.”

During Umar’s reign no one dared to misappropriate anything of Bayt al-Mal (the treasury) because of his severity in practicing justice.

Imam Ali (s) always enlightened the Muslims to defend their rights and to interfere in the state affairs. Therefore, in order to grant some privileges to people, Imam Ali (s) ordered his officers to read the items of the constitution of his rule before the people in the mosque to make them know their duties and the wali's duties. Consequently the walis would not dare to rule out of the law and the people, if the walis did something wrong, were not to obey them and were to report about their offences to Imam Ali.

During Imam Ali’s reign no one had the right to exploit any other by force. He wrote to the walis: “Although excavating canals and cleaning out rivers are necessary a progressive state but you have no right to force anyone to do it unwillingly.”

Imam Ali himself never forced any one to join his army even at the critical situations in his various battles in spite of that they had paid homage to him and obeying him was obligatory for them.

When the wali of Medina tried to seek for some men, who fled from Medina to join Mu’awiyah in Sham, [١] Imam Ali wrote to him: “Do not worry if some people did not like to remain under my just rule. Let them go wherever they like.”

At the first days of Imam Ali's caliphate, some of his close friends were angry because of that two companions (Sa'd ibn Abu Waqqass and Abdullah ibn Umar) had not paid homage to Imam Ali. Imam Ali said: "Those, who do not like to co-operate with me, are free as long as they do not excite sedition against people." He believed that a human .being was free and independent in thinking, deciding and in practicing

He had expressed himself in his will to his son Imam Hasan by saying: "You have to investigate and think over what has descended to you from your ancestors and then to ".beg God's help in order not to fall into doubts

There is a general rule in Islam that the believers have to fight against oppression and injustice. The Holy Qur'an says: (Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war is .made because they are oppressed, and most surely Allah is well able to assist them.) ۲۲:۳۹

.Imam Ali encouraged people to get back their rights by force as possible as they could

He thought that nobody should tolerate injustice; therefore he had said: "Be against the oppressor and support the oppressed." The oppressors always rule according to their minds instead of the law. They always cause misfortunes and distresses by spreading .injustice with its undue influences

Nowadays the colonial countries exert pressure inhumanely upon the backward nations and, in order to keep their illegal interests, they keep them pauper by spoiling their .natural resources and preventing them from the scientific development

p: ۱۳۹

Regretfully they pretend themselves the champions of freedom and the defenders of the .human rights

Imam Ali (s) would never give an opportunity to his officers to abuse their power to violate .people's rights, because he esteemed man in all respects

He had instructed the tax collectors by saying: "Do not walk through the people's farms because it destroys their efforts and it makes them feel unhappy. Do not take from them more than the legal share. When you arrive at a village, you are to go to their watering places and not to go in front of their houses. First of all, you are to greet them and to talk with them kindly. You say: "O servants of God, the caliph of God has sent us to you to collect the zakat and the alms from you." If the answer was no, you are not to be sever with them and then you are not to repeat your demand. But if they respond and wanted to apportion their yields, let them take the share that they have set aside for themselves. Be careful not to enter their cattle-pens without their permission and take care not to ".browbeat or frighten any Muslim

He said in another letter: "This is my instructions to you; fear Allah (avoid sins) in your secret matters and hidden actions, where no one is present except Allah and no one watches except Him. You have to obey Allah in the same way when openly or secretly. You are not to harm people. You are not to be rough to them and you are not to turn your faces away from them proudly because of your positions. They are your brethren in faith and you are in need of their help in achieving your job. Of course you have certain shares and rights in this poor-rate and the poor, the weak and the indigents have other shares. ".We shall pay you your rights and you too have to care for their demands

p: ۱۴۰

.He always asserted people's rights, small or big, secretly or openly

He wrote to one of his officers saying: "Do not say to the people that you are their master or a man of authority and that they have to obey you. This will spoil your heart and weaken your faith in religion and furthermore it creates anarchy in the state."

He himself controlled everything of the state affairs so that no one could infringe on others' rights at his time.

It was reported to him that the wali of the districts had misappropriated the treasury. He wrote to him: "The goodness of your father cheated me to think that you will follow his right manner and you will imitate him, but according to what was reported to me, you have followed your own passions. You leave the religion and morality behind by doing your relatives favors. You better your life by spoiling your afterlife. (His saying was in compliance with the Holy Qur'an when saying: (Then as for him who is inordinate, and prefers the life of this world, then surely the hell, that is the abode) ۷۹:۳۷-۳۹.)A man like you is good for nothing. You are not able to drive the harm away nor worthy of being given a promotion, nor trustworthy against misappropriation..... Come to me as soon as this letter reaches you inshallah."

Imam Ali, in one of his sermons, said: "By Allah, if I sleep on the Sa'dan [۲] wakefully or I will be pulled bound in chains, is better to me than to meet Allah and His apostle on the Day of Judgment wronging some people or extorting something of the vanities of the world."

p: ۱۴۱

Imam Ali (s) had given a right to the government to punish the offenders to be as a .warning for the others

A man was heard crying for help about Hamadan (a city in the west of Iran). It appeared that someone had bought a shirt and paid the seller some spotted coins and slapped him on the face. They were disputing with each other when Imam Ali (s) got there. At last the buyer was forced to change the forged money. It was decided

that the seller avenge himself on buyer by slapping him on the face. Although the buyer was forgiven by the seller but Imam Ali (s) slapped the buyer on the face and said: "This is [the right of the government too."[۳

Imam Ali wrote in his will for his son Imam Hasan: "O my son, make yourself the judge between you and the others. Like for the others what you like for yourself and dislike for them what you dislike for yourself. Do not oppress anyone as long as you do not want to be oppressed. Whatever you think as being bad for the others to do, think of it as being bad for you too to do. Deal with people in a way as you like them to deal with you. Do not talk about what you do not know well. Do not say to the others what you do not like to be ".said to you

Nowadays the eighth Islamic summit meeting will be held in Tehran to find reasonable solutions for the difficult problems and tangled affairs of the Muslims all over the world. The presidents and the prime-ministers will attend the meeting, which will be presided by President Muhammad Khatami. Among the main problems, which will be discussed in the meeting, is the Zionist aggression against Palestine and the civil war in Afghanistan. Some .other problems concerning the Islamic countries will be discussed too

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Imam Ali (s) had instructed the Muslims with many advices in the field of governing and dealing with different classes of society such as the army, the merchants, the industrial community, the agricultural sect and the poor. He fixed the basic sides of the Islamic government; administration, public services, judiciary, the financial affairs and the clerical affairs. It was useful not only for the officials of the government but also when dealing with the various problems and situations. Some of his instructions were pointed out earlier but his most famous epistle to Malik al-Ashtar, the wali of Egypt, included all the .mention instructions and a large number of highly regardable rules

The letter is as the following: "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. This is what the servant of Allah, Ali, Ameer-al-Mu'mineen, has ordered Malik al-Ashtar, who is appointed as wali of Egypt, ordering him to collect its revenue, to fight its enemies, to manage its people's affairs and to improve the country. He is ordered to fear Allah and to obey Him and to follow what Allah has ordered in His book of obligations and norms, which no one will be prosperous unless by following and no one will be wretched unless by denying and missing, to support Allah (by supporting the rightness) with his heart, hand and tongue, because Allah has promised to support whomever support Him and to glorify whomever glorifies Him. He is ordered to control his soul's fancies and to subdue his soul if it wants to recalcitrate, because the soul often incites towards evil except for those, .whom Allah has mercy upon

p: ۱۴۳

O Malik, know that I have sent you to a country that had experienced just and unjust rules before you. The people will think of your deeds as you thought of the deeds of the walis, who preceded you, and they will talk about you as you talked about the walis ruled before you. The virtuous men will be known by what is said about them by the people (by the favor of Allah). Let the loveliest provision to your self be the benevolent doing. Control your fancy and prevent yourself from what is not legal to you because controlling one's self is the very fairness whether he likes or dislikes it.

Fill your heart with mercy, love and kindness towards your people and do not be with them like the beast waiting for the opportunity to eat them, because people are of two kinds; either your brothers in religion or your brothers in humanity. They fall into mistakes and may be incited by the slips. They may commit sins on purpose or unknowingly. So you are to forgive them as you like Allah to forgive you. You rule over them and the responsible guardian rules over you and Allah is upon the one, who installed you. Allah tries you by managing your people's affairs so do not be in a war against Allah (by trespassing His Sharia and by wronging His people) because you are unable to put up with His wrath and you cannot do without his forgiveness and mercy. Do not regret when you forgive someone and do not boast when you punish someone. Do not be angry about something that you may find an excuse for it. Do not say: "I am the superior. I order and I must be obeyed" for it corrupts the heart and destroys the religion and approaches to the others (the opponents).

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If your high position gives a sense of splendor or pride, you are to think of the supreme power of Allah above you and His ability to act upon you what you can never put up with. This will lessen your vanity, prevent your sharpness and restore what is missed of your reason to you.

Beware not to compare yourself with Allah in His greatness or to imitate Him in His supreme power because Allah degrades every arrogant and demeans every haughty one.

Be fair before Allah and do not prefer yourself or your relatives and close companions to the people. If you do not follow this, you will wrong; and whoever wrongs the people, Allah will be his opponent and when Allah becomes the opponent of someone, He refutes his excuses and that he will be in a state of war against Allah until he desists from oppression or he repents.

Nothing leads to change the blessings of Allah and to hasten His wrath more than to persist in oppression, because Allah hears the prayer of the oppressed and He always waylays the oppressors.

Let the loveliest thing to yourself be that which is moderate in rightness, more general in justice and widely accepted by the people. Know that the discontent of the public removes the content of the upper class and that the discontent of the upper class will be excused by the content of the public.

No one is more dependent upon the wali during the ease, less helpful during the distress, more reluctant of justice, more insistent on gifts, less grateful when gifted, less indulgent when prevented and less patient during misfortunes than the upper class.

p: ۱۴۵

Whereas the pillar of the religion and the entire of the Muslims, who are always ready to stand against the enemy, are the public of the ummah, so let your tendency be with them .and let your attention be to them

Let him, who looks for the defects of people, be the farthest one from you and the most odious to you because people have defects that the wali is the first one, who has to cover them. Do not try to disclose what is hidden of those defects but you have to purify what is appeared of them to you and Allah decides upon what is unknown for you. Cover the defects (of people) as possible as you can and Allah will cover of your defects as what you .like to cover of your people's defects

Remove every grudge from the people's hearts by behaving fairly with them and get rid of every enmity. Ignore whatever is not clear to you and do not hasten to believe any slanderer because a slanderer is deceitful even if he imitates the sincere people. Let neither a miser participate in your consultation because he makes you be away from virtue and frighten you of poverty if you want to spend, nor a coward because he disheartens you nor a greedy one because he graces greed for you with wrongfulness. Miserliness, cowardliness and greed are different instincts but they participate in one .common thing, which is distrusting Allah

The worst of your viziers are they, who were viziers of the wicked rulers before you and who participated in their sins; so do not let them be of your retinue because they were the supporters of the sinners and the brothers of the unjust. You will find better than them, who have the same experience but without sins and guilts and who haven't helped the unjust with their injustice nor the sinners with their sins. They will be less burdensome on you, more helpful for you, more kind-hearted to you and less intimate with other than you (the opponents). So you depend on such people as your retinue and then let the most preferable one to you that, who is the most truthful in saying the bitter truth to you and the least helpful when you do what Allah hates for His guardians to do whether it agrees with your fancy or not. Stick to the pious and truthful people and inure them not to praise you or make you feel proud about something that you haven't done because much praise .leads to vanity and arrogance

Do not consider the benevolent and the evil as equal because you will discourage the benevolent to do benevolence and courage the offensive to commit more offenses. You have to reward every one according to his doing. Know that nothing makes the ruler think much of his people better than to be kind to them and to lessen their burden and not to force them to do what they are not able to do. Let you, by doing that, cause a mutual trust between you and your people because confidence will keep you away from many troubles. As long as you do good to them they will confide in you and as long as you do evil .to them they will distrust in you

Do not break a good tradition followed by the leaders of this ummah, upon which the ummah agreed unanimously and was a cause of the people's virtuousness. Do not create a tradition, which will oppose some of those previous traditions, so that the merit will be for those, who enacted those traditions, and the sin will be upon you because you oppose .them

Always discuss with the ulema and the wise men to firm what improves the affairs of your .state and to revive what have rectified the people before you

Remember that the people are composed of different classes. The progress of one is dependent on the progress of the other; and none can afford to be independent of the other. We have the army formed of the soldiers of God; we have our civil officers and their establishments, our judiciary, our revenue collectors and our public relations officers. The general public itself consists of Muslims and Thimmis [۴] and among them are merchants and craftsmen, the unemployed and the indigent. Allah has prescribed for them their several rights, duties and obligations. They are all defined and preserved in the .Book of Allah and in the traditions of His Prophet

p: ۱۴۷

The soldiers, by the grace of Allah, are like a fortress to the people and they lend dignity to the state. They uphold the prestige of the faith and maintain the peace of the country. Without them, the state cannot stand and also they cannot stand without the support of the state. Our soldiers have proved strong before the enemy because of the privilege Allah has given them to fight for Him; but they have their material needs to be fulfilled and have therefore to depend upon the income provided for them from the state revenue. The military and the civil population, who pay revenue, both need the cooperation of the others; the judiciary, the civil officers and the clerks, who run the transactions and dealings among people, and the all cannot do without the tradesmen, the merchants and the craftsmen, who run the market and offer their services to the others who may not be able to do by themselves. And then, there is the class of the poor and the needy, whose maintenance is an obligation on the other classes. Allah has given an appropriate opportunity of living to the all; and then the rights of all of these classes are to be under the charge of the wali and nothing will acquit the wali of his charge except by carrying out his charge fairly with full carefulness after praying Allah to support him. Indeed, it is obligatory for him to undertake this duty and to bear with patience the inconvenience and .difficulties of the task

p: ۱۴۸

Be particularly mindful of the welfare of those in the army, who, in your opinion, are staunchly faithful to their God and His Apostle and loyal to your imam, who, in the hour of passion, can restrain themselves and listen coolly to the sensible remonstrance, and who can succor the weak and smite the strong, who will not be incited by the violent .provocation and who will not falter at any stage

Keep to those of good reputation, integrity and glorious past. Depend upon those of courage and bravery and of magnanimity and generosity because they are the base of liberality and the sources of benevolence. Care for them as parents care for their children and do not exaggerate what you have done to them. Do not leave any little kindness to them you think it may be worthless because any kindness towards them will lead them to confide in you and to offer you the sincere advice. Attend to every bit of their wants. Do not be content with general help that you may have given to them, for sometimes, timely .attention to a little want of theirs brings them immense relief

Let your commander in chief be the one, who helps his men and gives them from his wealth what suffices them and suffices their families left behind so that their intention will be the same in their jihad against the enemy. Your being kind to them will turn their .hearts towards you

The best delight of the wali's eye is by spreading justice in the country and by the expression of the people's cordiality. They do not express their goodwill except when their hearts are contented and they will not be sincere unless they are willing to safeguard their walis and are contented with their rule and are hopeful of their aims so try to achieve their hopes and keep on praising them and mentioning their good deeds .because praising the good deeds provokes the brave and incites the laggard inshallah

p: ۱۴۹

Keep every one's right and do not ascribe someone's excellence to another. Do not belittle one's great deed. Do not let someone's nobility lead you to glorify his slight deed .and do not let the meanness of someone's lead you to belittle his great deed

Turn to Allah and to His Prophet for guidance whenever you feel uncertain about what you have to do. Allah had said to some people, whom He wished to guide: (O you who believe! obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Apostle). Referring to Allah is to obey His Book and referring to the Prophet is to follow his Sunnah, which calls for unity and .warns of separation

Choose, for judging among people, the best of them to you, who is not obsessed by distresses, doesn't become importunate before the opponents, doesn't keep on mistakes, doesn't miss reason, doesn't hesitate to follow the truth when he finds it, doesn't think of greed, doesn't satisfy with the least perception without looking for the farthest, the most pondering on the confused matters, the most dependent upon evidences, the least bored in inspecting the opponents, the most determined when the truth appears, who isn't affected by praise, who isn't incited by any temptation and these .are very few

Observe his (the judge) judgments always and be openhanded to him to satisfy his needs so that he won't be in need of the people. Give him a position in your court so high that none can even dream of coveting it and so high that neither backbiting nor intrigue can touch him. Think of this so much for this religion was captive under the control of the evildoers. They used it according to their fancies and as a means to obtain the vain .pleasures of this worldly life

p: ۱۵۰

Then think about your officials. Employ them after trying. Do not appoint them favoringly or autocratically because they are full of injustice and treason. Seek after the experienced and coy men of the benevolent families and the previous in Islam because they are more honest, less greedy and more prudent. Then supply them with sufficient living for it helps them to purify themselves and prevent them from seizing what is there under their control and it will be an evidence against them if they break your order or betray the trust. Then check their jobs and send truthful and sincere inspectors to watch them. Watching them secretly leads them to be honest and loyal in doing their jobs and to be kind to the people. If one of them betrays the trust, you will be informed of that by your spies and this will be enough witness to let you punish him, disgrace him, defame .him and girt him with the shame of the guilt according to what he commits

Take much care for the revenue so as to prosper the producers because their prosperity leads to prosper the others. There is no prosperity without them because all the people are dependent upon them. Let you think of reclaiming the lands more than to think of getting the revenue. Whoever seeks after revenue without reforming, will ruin the country and destroy the people and his rule won't last long. If they (the farmers) complain of deficiency or lack of water (of the rivers or the rains) or that their farms are damaged by floods, you have to aid them with what may lessen their sufferings. Do not be vexed about what you give them to relieve their distress because they will, in return, recompense in prospering your country and strengthening your rule besides getting their goodwill and being delighted by spreading justice among them. They will join their power .to yours and will confide in you after doing them favors and being fair with them

p: ۱۵۱

One day if something happens, you may charge them with a heavy burden and you find that they undertake it willingly. Prosperity bears whatever you burden it with. The desolation of the land comes out of the indigence of its people and the indigence of the people comes out of the eagerness of the walis for heaping up monies for themselves, their distrust about remaining in their positions and that they do not learn from the .previous examples

Then think about you clerks. Trust your affairs to the best of the people. Trust your special books, in which you put your plans and secrets, to the one, who is honest, who doesn't pride upon his position so that he may dare to stand against you in front of the people when there is a disagreement between you and him, who doesn't ignore to inform you of the correspondences of your officials in the different countries or to reply the received books correctly instead of you, who doesn't weaken a contract he concludes for you and won't be unable to cancel an ineffective contract, who isn't ignorant of his ability in dealing with the affairs because he, who ignores his own ability, is more ignorant of the others' abilities. Let your choosing them not be according to physiognomy and confidence because people feign before the walis so that they may think well of them but in fact there is nothing of truthfulness and fidelity behind that. You have to try them with what they did to the just walis, who ruled before you and then choose the best in serving the public and the most loyal among them. This will show your sincerity to Allah and to him, who entrusted you with the position you hold. Appoint for each of your affairs one, who won't be defeated before the great difficulties nor will be lost among the many problems when facing him. If you ignore any defect available in your clerks you will be responsible .for it

p: ۱۵۲

Take much care for the merchants and the craftsmen; the residents and the ones roving through the countries and take much care for the laborers because they are the source of the welfare and the means that brings devices and utensils from here and there, on the land and in the sea, from the plain and the mountain where people cannot reach. They (merchants and craftsmen) are peaceful people, who do not cause troubles or calamities. Care for their affairs in your country and about it. And know-nevertheless- that many of them are cruel in dealing, with bad stinginess, monopolizing the utilities and controlling the deals. This is a disadvantage for the public and a defect for the walis. Prevent monopoly, because the Prophet had prohibited it. Let dealing be lenient and fair and with fair prices for the two parties; the seller and the buyer. If someone monopolizes something after being forbidden, then you have to punish him severely but without .exceeding the limit of justice

For the sake of Allah, take much care for the lower class; the poor, the needy, the destitute and the handicapped who have no way to get their living. Among this class there are the beggars and those, who are in serious need but without begging. Obey Allah with what He have entrusted you of their rights. Assign for them something from the treasury and something from the yields of the Muslims' plundered lands in each country. The far and the near of them have equal right and you are responsible for the right of every one of them. Do not be careless about them because you won't be forgiven when wasting the slight thing for the sake of achieving the great thing. Do not be ignorant about their affairs and do not be proud before them. Seek for those, whose news do not reach you because that people scorn them and hate to look at them. Order some of benevolent and humble people to seek for those destitute ones and to inform you of their affairs and then you are to do to them what Allah may forgive you for when you meet Him because this sect of people is in need of fairness more than the others. Anyhow you have to give every one his .right

p: ۱۵۳

Attend to the orphans and the old people, who are helpless and do not demean themselves by begging people. This is too heavy for the walis and the whole rightness is heavy but Allah may make it easy for those, who hope for the good end by being patient .and believe in what Allah has promised them of

Assign some of your time to the plaintiffs. You sit humbly with them in a public meeting and keep your guards and soldiers away from them in order that they may talk frankly without any fear. I had heard the Prophet (s) saying more than a time: "A nation will not be sanctified if the right of the weak is not taken back from the powerful without threat or fear." Tolerate their severity and ineloquence. Do not show them intolerance and disdain so that Allah spreads upon you his mercy and rewards you for your obeying Him. If you .give, give willingly and if you deny, deny kindly and apologizingly

There are certain things that you have to do yourself; you have to answer your governors when your clerks are unable to, you have to answer the people's wants as soon as they reach you as your assistants may delay them. Achieve every day's duty in time because each day has its own duties. Choose for yourself the best time to be with Allah. Know that the greatest of your doings, although that they all are to be for the sake of Allah, are .those that you do with good will and those you do for the sake of your people

p: ١٥۴

Let the best thing, with which you worship Allah sincerely, be the offering of his obligations, which are for Allah alone. Tire your body for your God during your day and night. Approach to Allah sincerely with all what you do for the sake of Him without any shortage or hypocrisy whatever you become tired. When you lead the people in offering the prayer, try neither to lengthen it nor to lose anything of it because among the people there are some, who are ill, and some, who have things to do. Once I asked the Prophet (s), when he had ordered me to go to Yemen, about how to lead people in offering the prayer and he said: "Offer it like the prayer of the weakest of them and be kind to the ".believers

Do not hide too long from your people because the hiding of the walis from the people is a kind of distress and ignorance of their affairs. Hiding from the people prevents them from knowing why they are kept away and so the great thing will be insignificant for them and the insignificant thing will be great, the good things will be bad and the bad will be good and the truth will be confused with falsehood. The wali is but a human being. He doesn't know what is hidden of the people's affairs and the rightness has no signs that one can distinguish between the truthfulness and the falsehood. You (the wali) are but one of two; either you are a man with a liberal character following rightness so why do you hide from a right duty that you are to do or a deed of munificence you are to offer? or a man of stinginess and then you will find that how soon the people will despair of asking you for anything in spite of that the most of people's wants are of complaining of wrongfulness or .asking for fairness of a conduct, which do not cost you anything

p: ۱۵۵

The wali has a retinue and close companions, among whom there are some selfish, impudent and unfair persons when dealing with people. Cut off this thing by cutting off the reason that encourages them to be so. Do not donate to anyone of your retinue or relatives a donation. Let them not expect from you to posses any property, which will harm other peoples of their watering or a shared act. They (the wali's retinue or relatives) enjoy it at the expense of the others and hence the benefit will be for them whereas the blame will be upon you in this life and in the afterlife.

Make every one submit to the rightness whoever he is whether your retinue and relatives or not. Be patient and tolerant in applying that whatever effect it has upon your relatives and close companions. Care for its result whatever heavy it is to you because the result of that will be good.

If the people suspect you of doing injustice, come out to them with your evidence to refute their suspicion, because by this you will accustom yourself to justice. Be kind to your people when showing your evidences to achieve your aim in rectifying them according to the rightness.

Do not refuse the peace your enemy invites you for if it pleases Allah because peace will bring your soldiers comfort, make you safe from your troubles and bring security for your country. But be extremely careful of your enemy after the peace because the enemy may approach to you under the pretense of peace in order to attack you unexpectedly. So be resolute and doubt your enemy's good will. When you conclude an agreement with your enemy or you promise of something, you have to keep your agreement with fidelity and to keep your promise with loyalty. Make yourself as the safeguard of what you have promised because nothing of Allah's obligations that people agree upon, in spite of their different thoughts and fancies, is better than to glorify fulfilling the promises. The polytheists, rather than the Muslims, kept to their promises among them when they saw the bad results of perfidy. So do not betray your agreement, do not break your promise and do not cheat your enemy for no one dares to disobey Allah but the miserable ignorant. Allah made His promise as safety that He spread between His people with His mercy and made it as sanctum, to whose power people resorted and to whose protection they hurried. So never let thwarting, cheating or forging be with your promises. Do not conclude an agreement that you may use confused statements in order to find a way that

you can cheat with it and do not depend upon a solecism as an excuse after certifying your promise. Let no distress lead you to annul your promise unfairly because tolerating a distress that you expect its relief and good result is better than cheating that you fear its bad consequence besides that Allah will ask you about His right of fidelity you break and then He will bless neither your life nor your afterlife.

p: ۱۵۶

Avoid and avoid shedding blood unjustly and without any right cause leading you to. Nothing leads hurriedly to wrath, to evil consequence, to transience of blessings and cessation of life worse than shedding bloods unrightfully. Allah the Almighty will judge among His people, first of all, about shedding bloods on the Day of Resurrection. Do not try to firm your rule by shedding haram blood because this will weaken and enfeeble your rule or indeed it will remove your rule and transfer it to others. Neither Allah nor I will forgive you for an intended killing because it must have a penalty. If you face a wrong doing, let your whip, sword or hand not exceed in punishment because a blow may cause a killing. Let your rule not make you proud that you do not give the guardians of the killed .one their right

Avoid self-conceit; do not confide in what you like of your self and do not wish to be praised because this is the best opportunity for the Satan to crush the benevolence from .inside the benevolent

Do not mention the favors you do to your people. Do not exaggerate your deeds and do not promise your people and then you break your promise, because mentioning the favors done by you voids benevolence, exaggeration puts out the light of rightness and breaking the promise brings detestation of Allah and the people. Allah said: (It is most .(hateful to Allah that you should say that which you do not do

p: ۱۵۷

Do not give your judgment about the matters before their time and do not be indifferent when they occur. Do not insist upon dispute when the matters are not clear and do not be indifferent when they become clear. Put every thing in its place and every order in its .concernment

Do not distinguish yourself with what the people are equal in and do not ignore your duties when they become clear for the people because what you take unrightfully, will be taken from you to the others and how soon your affairs will be uncovered and then the .rights of the wronged ones will be extracted from you

Control your passion, intensity, power and sharpness of your tongue. Be away of all that by preventing your tongue from setting about and by delaying your power until your rage calms down and then you have the option to decide. You won't control yourself until you .worry yourself with recalling that you will meet your God in the afterworld

You have to remember what preceded you of a just government, a virtuous norm, a tradition of our Prophet (s) or an obligation in the Book of Allah and then you have to imitate what we have done according to that and to try your best to follow what I have entrusted you with in this charter. I have quitted myself from anything you may protest with later on and lest you find any excuse when you hasten after your fancy. I pray Allah, with His infinite mercy and great power of granting every wish, to grant me and you success to do what pleases Him and His people with the rightful conduct and to make us worthy of people's good will and to offer beneficial achievements to the country. I pray Allah to grant us blessing, dignity and to conclude my life and yours with happiness and martyrdom. To Allah we will return. Peace be upon the messenger of Allah and Allah may ".bless him and his pure progeny with great peace and blessing. With salaam

p: ۱۵۸

This letter, which really represented the charter of the Islamic government, had been written by Imam Ali (s), who was a prodigy of science. He applied whatever he had said in it. The letter showed that his aim was only to execute the divine law and to improve the social conditions without disturbing the public peace and no to give any chance to the plunderers to misappropriate the public funds. It comprised all the Islamic principles calling for spreading justice, protecting the human rights without differentiating between the blacks and the whites or Muslims and non - Muslims. It was really a good guide to .civilized Islam

He had declared the duties of the wali and the people, the duty of the rich towards the poor and the fulfillment of the obligations of Allah. Furthermore he pointed out the particulars of an Islamic government and he had paved the way for the Islamic .organizations and administrations to follow the best bases

In order to spread justice and to fight against oppression, he used to rouse the feeling of freewill and freedom among the people by exhorting them to seek their rights and to stand up to the aggressors. In this concern he said: "By Allah, I will take the right of the oppressed from the oppressor and I will guide the oppressor with his nose to the way of rightness even if he is unwilling." He also said: "Be an enemy of the oppressor and a helper to the oppressed." He said: "Allah may have mercy upon him, who supports rightfulness when he sees it and rejects wrongfulness when he sees it and who supports the ".oppressed against the oppressor

p: ۱۵۹

But the worldly governments try to change the law for the benefit of them and hence they cause harms to their peoples because they are cruel and merciless and they have no faith in the merciful God; consequently they violate the principles of the law and then they run .after the pleasures of their short life

Hence the private and individual interests come forth and the rule of struggle for getting benefits and avoiding losses start to run and the human beings are involved in quarrels and competitions. Then the human affection and the sense of friendship and brotherhood disappear and man falls into laziness and carnality at last whereas the faith in God and believing in the afterworld gives man the security and peace of mind; that peacefulness which causes man to be attentive to God, to undertake the responsibility of his own doings, to fight against evils for the sake of God and does his best to build and make the .world habitable and consequently he will be expectant of good rewards in the future life

Such faith in God with the aim of being friend and brother with the others and fighting against oppression for the sake of spreading justice and defending goodness to honor of .goodness itself is the very faith that takes man to welfare and peacefulness

Therefore the Jews and the Christians are highly recommended to resign themselves to the Mosaic Law and the gospel and to adopt them as a belief to be saved from worries .and anxieties

p: ۱۶۰

But Islam is different from the other religions. It directs man to the Most High and the One and Only God, Who has the control over all the circumstances, and to believe that He has created the whole creatures and all people are His servants. He deserves the real sovereignty and no human being can secure his benefit or avoid harm without His will. Consequently a freehearted Muslim doesn't worry about the quarrels of the world and .doesn't deem it necessary to injure the others

From a study of Imam Ali's words through Nahj al-Balaghah we conclude that Islam, in the first step, purifies people from bad qualities and in this way it makes them free from all passions and fancies. Such people will never submit to abjection and will never leave the field of fighting against cruelty and oppression because they are not captured by .passions

And for this reason Islam looks kindly to those people, who are free of passions, and .ranks them with the mujahidin and not with the wretched and hypocrites

The Holy Qur'an says: (Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your mates and your kinsfolk and property, which you have acquired, and the slackness of trade which you fear and dwellings which you like, are dearer to you than Allah and His Apostle and striving in His way, then wait till Allah brings about His command; and Allah .does not guide the transgressing people) ۹:۲۴

What a worthy proclamation it is! All the worldly passions have been put in a scale-pan of the balance and loving God and His Apostle and striving in the way of Him in the other scale-pan. Of course the pan of godliness is heavier because of the moral distinction of .the faith in God

p: ۱۶۱

Islam, in its first steps, tried to free man from superstitions and false imaginations, because the world was immersed in superstitions and delusions before the advent of Islam. Some of those superstitions were innovated by people and some others were attributed to God by some distinguished religious men and all of those superstitions .arouse from ignorance that people were afflicted with from old times

It was mentioned in Nahj al-Balaghah that when Imam Ali (s) determined on setting out to Siffeen, one of his companions said to him: "According to astrology, you will not be successful in your aim if you set out at this moment." Imam Ali (s) exclaimed with anger and said: "Do you think that you can tell which moment one may go out without facing any evil or can you bring good news of which moment one may go to obtain good?" Then he turned towards his men and said: "O people, avoid learning astrology [۵] except that by which you are to be guided on the land or in the sea, because it leads you to divining. An astrologer is a diviner and the diviner is like the sorcerer, the sorcerer is like the ".unbeliever and the unbeliever would be in hell

Anyhow Islam came to release the nations from the false imaginations that were engraved in the figures of the idols. Islam invited people to worship the One and Only God, who is free from false delusions, and called them to use their mental faculties as a guide towards the truths of life and to depend upon the scientific facts to be certain about the truth of the existence of Allah

p: ۱۶۲

It is undeniable to say that when Islam appeared, the world was immersed in corruption .and oppression and people had submitted themselves to debauchery and carnality

The two empires of Rome and Iran were involved awkwardly in immoral habits, the people were treated inhumanely and unjustly and the rulers used to encroach upon the other's rights. Then Islam came and reformed the corrupted conditions and changed that disgraceful situation into a peaceful life full of delight and motion and it prepared people to live morals and virtues. Hence the world of Islam became the source of learning and instruction for a long time, so the Muslims were known as an obvious example of humanity, but as a result of the undue influence of the colonial policy of the West and because of the ignorance of the Islamic statesmen the Islamic morals and ideals began to disappear gradually throughout this nation. Consequently the Muslims were captured by passions and laziness and they fell into the actual misfortune at last. The colonial policy of the West, in the last two centuries, was based on creating discords and splitting among the people of the backward countries. Those political conspiracies led those people to live .in poverty

The new rising, which is going to be powerful throughout the Islamic countries and to be active again, is really a great rising especially in Iran. It is inspired from the past experience. All the material and ideal powers are prepared for its advancement. Therefore it is clear that this lively rising can easily perform the same miracles that Islam .did at its first days to uproot the corruptions of today

p: ۱۶۳

Islam can order the individual and social requirements of people that no one may violate the others' and no race may oppress another race or a nation may overcome other nations. Islam can prevent quarrels and disputes. Islam invites every one to compromise .and mutual assistance for the sake of man's welfare

Many demonstrations formed in some of the Islamic countries in favor of the mentioned rising. It indicated that the people really wanted an Islamic government but unfortunately they were suppressed by their rulers cruelly. Certainly the colonial countries had a hand in .these problems

Now there is a fanatic war against Islam and its philosophy allover the world. Some rulers of the Islamic countries, who commit treasons against their countries, are really more dangerous than the foreigners and they support the colonial policies knowingly or .unknowingly

[۱] .Sham is the old name of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine

[۲] .A kind of thorny plants of Arabia

[۳] .It was mentioned by at-Tabari in his Tareekh

[۴] .(The free non-Muslims, who live under the Islamic rule by paying jizya (tribute

[۵] .Here Imam Ali meant fortune-telling or divination and not astronomy

?HOW AND BY WHICH WAY CAN WE REACH THE TRUTH OF ISLAM

Imam Ali (s) wrote in his will to Imam Hasan: "O my son, know that … (if you do not like to follow your ancestors and virtuous people), first you have to search the truth by the way of understanding and perceiving so that you do not fall into doubts or become involved in "…disputes

p: ۱۶۴

Nowadays man has progressed in the field of science vastly and is able to think over the whole social problems. On the other hand we understand from the history the cause of the decline of a great civilization by a small one and for what reason a small nation can obtain a victory over a great nation. We can say that the real cause is believing in the goal and steadfastness in the belief. Now the world is in the same situation that the Muslims were facing at the beginning of Islam. They confronted many widespread corruptions and crimes so that we have to confront them at the present time too. Although the Muslims were few in number, but they encountered the greatest empires in the history, whose force; men, equipments and wealth were incomparable to the force of the Muslims. In spite of the great difference in force, the Muslims could overcome those empires in less than fifty years and the Muslims took the reins of the two great governments of the .world. Therefore we have to study how this miraculous advancement took place

Neither the material powers nor the economic schools can justify this wonderful happening. The only thing that can be said is that the reason behind that was the steadfastness in belief; the same belief that made every Muslim say to the enemy, as the Holy Qur'an says: (Say: Do you await for us but one of two most excellent things? (Victory or martyrdom in the way of God and eventually the Garden of Eden) And we await for you that Allah will afflict you with punishment from Himself or by our hands. So wait; we too .will wait with you) ۹:۵۲

p: ۱۶۵

Then they attacked the enemy's line fearlessly to get one of the two honors. Yes, the only way to this holy aim is the faith in God and nothing else. There may be some people, compassionately or in order to destroy the morale of the Muslims, may say that the only .way to reach our goals is material tools and specially armaments

Of course we are in need of arms of different kinds but it is of secondary importance. First we have to strengthen our faith and then to stand up to the oppressors of the East and the West. We do not have to expect unreal dangers but we have to devote ourselves to the progress and to withstand the colonial policies in order to secure the public welfare .throughout the world

:The Holy Qur'an says

(And prepare against them what force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them, whom you do not know (but) Allah knows them; and whatever thing you will spend in Allah's way, it will be .paid back to you fully and you shall not be dealt with unjustly) ۸:۶۰

The Islamic revolution that will bring down the oppressors and shake the foundation of the tyrants is going to take form to spread its holy aim widely by the help of material and moral forces. The aim is to spread the social justice. The Muslims bear glad tidings of a new world that humans will not be cornered by material forces or be captured by .economical necessities

p: ۱۶۶

As it was said before that some Islamic groups are fighting now against the devilish forces in their own countries for the sake of freedom and social justice but unfortunately they are suppressed by some internal xenophiles, who are more dangerous than the .foreigners

:Imam Ali said

Jihad is one of the doors of Paradise that Allah has opened for His close saints. It is the" dress of piety and the protective armor of Allah and His firm shield. Whoever turns away from it (jihad), Allah will clothe him with a dress of disgrace and distress, his heart is covered with a curtain of ignorance, rightfulness is hidden from him, he is to live in ".abjection and he is prevented from justice because he refused to go to Jihad

Anyhow these xenophiles have to know that since these movements support Allah's .religion, Allah will support them too and eventually they will achieve their aim

:The Holy Qur'an says

And (as for) those who strive hard for Us, We will most certainly guide them in Our ways;) .and Allah is most surely with the doers of good) ٢٩:۶٩

Of course it is necessary for the Islamic ummah to be self-sacrificing and devoted to reach their goals as the first Muslims did during the time of the Prophet and made the peoples hear that the world of Islam is full of goodness and welfare. The Muslims also have to know that these self-sacrifices will never be in vain, and that they will be guaranteed on the earth by Allah the Almighty. Imam Ali (s) always exhorted the people to seek their rights and to stand up to the oppressors. He said: "I will never show any "...indolence in fighting against one, who opposes the rightness or leads people astray

p: ١۶٧

:The Holy Qur'an says

And be not infirm and be not grieving, and you shall have the upper hand if you are) .believers) ۳:۱۳۹

:Imam Ali said again

O people, help me to cleanse your hearts. By Allah, I will revenge the oppressed on the" oppressor and I will pull the oppressor with (his halter) to the fountain of rightfulness ".even if he is unwilling

Nowadays, it is suggested to start arguments among the civilizations and so it is necessary for the intellectuals and the sociologists of the different countries to attend conferences and assemblies to find suitable answers for the politico-social crisis of the world and to treat the moral deviation and confusion among the youths. The Europeans acquired different sciences from the Muslims during the Crusades. Those sciences enlightened them and then led to the Renaissance of Europe. Now the Western and the Islamic civilizations have to communicate with each other to follow the best examples of .both sides and to find the right way to achieve a lasting peace

Now the Islamic countries have to follow the policies of their own great leaders and to practice the wise laws of the Holy Qur'an and to seek inspiration from the outstanding .personalities of Islam

Although all the Islamic statesmen and executors of the divine law were worthy personalities and they acted according to the spirit of Islam, but the most famous of them was Imam Ali (s), whose sayings and deeds were given an account in this book to be a .guide to civilized Islam

p: ۱۶۸

We argue with the other civilizations by virtue of this great personality with mutual .respect and without interfering in the civilian affairs of each other

On the other hand the Islamic countries are greatly recommended to unite with each :other as the Holy Qur'an says

.And hold fast by the covenant of Allah together and be not disunited (۳:۱۰۳)

The Muslim countries have to suffice their needs themselves as far as possible so that whenever an enemy made an attack against one of them, the other Muslim countries can .cut off the political and economical ties with the aggressive enemy

All of us must know that the only way of protecting our independence and regaining our .initial glory is to be united and to follow the principles of the civilized Islam

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About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities in .religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes .of people interested in reading, with various formats in the cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

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merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

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:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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